



**WATFORD  
BOROUGH  
COUNCIL**

# **CABINET**

**4 October 2021**

**7.00 pm**

**Town Hall, Watford**

**Contact**

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# Cabinet Membership

Mayor	P Taylor	(Chair)
Councillor	A Dychton	(Deputy Mayor)
Councillors	S Johnson, J Pattinson, I Stotesbury, M Watkin and T Williams	

## Agenda

### Part A – Open to the Public

- 1. Apologies for absence**
- 2. Disclosure of interests (if any)**
- 3. Minutes of previous meeting**

The [minutes](#) of the meeting held on 6 September 2021 to be submitted and signed.

- 4. Conduct of meeting**

The Cabinet may wish to consider whether there are any items on which there is general agreement which could be considered now, to enable discussion to focus on those items where the Cabinet sees a need for further debate.

- 5. Strategic Framework Progress Update (Q1 2021/2022) (Pages 4 - 86)**

Report of the Executive Head of Strategy and Communications and Head of Enterprise Programme Management Office

- 6. Road to Renewal Refresh (Pages 87 - 113)**

Report of the Executive Head of Strategy and Communications and Head of Enterprise Programme Management Office

- 7. Litter Strategy for Watford 2021- 2026 (Pages 114 - 158)**

Report of the Contract Manager – Parks and Streetcare

**8. River Colne Restoration Project Strategy (Pages 159 - 332)**

Report of the Contract Manager – Parks and Streetcare and the Temporary Parks Project Manager

**9. Community Protection Compliance Policy 2021-2026 (Pages 333 - 371)**

Report of the Business Compliance Officer

# Agenda Item 5

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date of meeting:** 4 October 2021

**Report author:** Executive Head of Strategy and Communications and  
Head of Enterprise Programme Management Office

**Title:** **Focusing on delivery:**  
Tracking progress on the Council Plan – 2020-24 / Delivery  
Plan – 2020-22 (Quarter 1, 2021/22) and Organisational Development  
Strategy 2020 – 24 (Quarter 1, 2021/22)

**Nature of Report:** For noting

## 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Watford Borough Council has set an ambitious agenda for the town and the council and has refined its strategic framework to ensure that it continues to build its reputation as a council that gets things done. A critical part of this approach is regular monitoring and reporting of the key elements of the council's strategic framework comprising:
- the Council Plan 2020-24 and Delivery Plan 2020-22;
  - the Organisational Development Strategy 2020-24; and
  - Covid-19 Road to Renewal Plan.
- 1.2 The updates on the progress on the plans reflect the positive outcomes that have been achieved through strengthening the council's strategic framework and establishing a clear focus for the organisation. This has enabled services to concentrate on what is important to the town and council. The progress achieved since the plans were approved in summer 2020 is shown in the updates appended to this report (Appendix A and B). It should also be noted that there is no update provided for this quarter on the Road to Renewal plan, which has been refreshed in light of the changing nature of the pandemic since last summer. This plan is included as a paper elsewhere within the Cabinet agenda pack. This will allow alignment of the plan with the recovery work undertaken by Hertfordshire County Council and our neighbouring districts.
- 1.3 All three plans were underpinned by our corporate understanding of both the external and internal environment at the time of their development. The council has faced tremendous challenges since the plans were approved, particularly around the emergence of the second and third waves of the Covid-19 pandemic and the associated lockdowns. Whilst these have not deflected the council's focus on delivery, it has impacted on some specific areas of work within the plans, which are

being re-profiled to ensure delivery within the life of plans.

- 1.4 In July 2020, Council approved the Council Plan 2020-24 and Delivery Plan 2020-22. The Council Plan 2020-24 and Delivery Plan 2020-22 are key part of the council's strategic framework, developed to ensure the organisation builds on the organisation's ambitious agenda for the town, and community, and integrating our approach to addressing the challenges of the post Covid-19 era.
- 1.5 The successful delivery of the commitments in the Council Plan 2020-24 is critical to ensuring we remain focused on what is important to the town and our residents and we are seen by our community as an organisation that delivers on its promises. The July 2020 report to Council outlined how the organisation would make sure it rose to the opportunities and challenges of the Council Plan and Delivery Plan, including reporting regularly to Cabinet on progress, milestones and achievements. These reports will then form the basis of an annual report to our community, which is due to be provided over the next quarter.
- 1.6 The Organisational Development Strategy 2020 – 24 and its associated Delivery Plan (both approved by Cabinet in July 2020) set out how the organisation will support staff deliver the Council Plan, helping them develop and grow their skills, knowledge and experiences so they can make an effective contribution to the organisation's achievements and serve the residents and community of Watford. A commitment was also made to provide Cabinet with regular updates on the delivery of this strategy and delivery plan.

## 2.0 Risks

### 2.1

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
Slippage on delivery of the Council Plan	Failure to deliver our commitments resulting in poorer outcomes for our town and residents.  Potential impact on the reputation of the Council.	Regular monitoring and reporting to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny  Robust project and programme management	Treat	3 (severity) x 2 (likelihood) = 6
Failure to recognise milestones / completion of commitments	Lost opportunity to celebrate success internally and externally	Regular monitoring and reporting to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny  Robust project and programme management  Clear communication of milestones / achievements	Treat	3 (severity) x 2 (likelihood) = 6
Failure to promote and recognise the Council's strategic approach and culture that is focused on delivery and outcomes	Lost opportunity to embed a renewed strategic approach and culture that ensures Watford BC remains a high performing, innovative and agile organisation	Regular, robust and accurate reports for Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny that is owned across service areas  Linking delivery to staff and team objectives	Treat	3 (severity) x 2 (likelihood) = 6
Slippage on delivery of the Organisational Development Strategy	Failure to deliver our commitments to staff potentially resulting in failure to deliver our Council Plan.  Potential impact on staff's health and wellbeing.	Regular monitoring and reporting to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny  Robust project and programme management.  Regular checking in with staff through 1:1s, team meetings, surveys, Staff Ambassador Group	Treat	3 (severity) x 2 (likelihood) = 6

Loss of skilled staff / difficulties in recruiting if Organisational Development Strategy is not delivered and the council is not perceived as a place where staff can develop and grow	Impact on delivery, potential cost implication if needed to recruit on short-term basis to fill posts	Regular monitoring and reporting to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny  Robust project and programme management.  Regular checking in with staff through 1:1s, team meetings, surveys, Staff Ambassador Group  Build into recruitment literature	Treat	3 (severity) x 2 (likelihood) = 6
Our Road to Renewal Plan is adopted but cannot be delivered	Town and council do not deliver the renewal as effectively as they could. Perceived lack of leadership and support	A significant appraisal of resourcing requirements has been undertaken in relation to the activities identified within the Road to Renewal Plan. This will be aligned to the corporate budget position prior to approval. A robust governance and reporting structure has also been established to ensure ongoing momentum and appropriate levels of scrutiny	Treat	3 (severity) x 2 (likelihood) = 6
Our Road to Renewal Plan does not allow for an agile response to the changing external environment	Council's support for renewal is not as effective as it could be	There may be need to accelerate, amend or stop the plans in the Renewal Plan in light of the fast changing external environment. The governance structure in place allows for a formal change control process so that decisions to deviate from the Road to Renewal Plan are not made in isolation and with full overview of the Renewal Co-ordination Board. The plan will be refreshed at appropriate times.	Treat	3 (severity) x 2 (likelihood) = 6

### **3.0 Recommendations**

#### **Cabinet is recommended to note:**

- 3.1 The progress updates within this report relating to:
- the Council Plan 2020-24 and Delivery Plan 2020 -22 (Appendix A)
  - the Organisational Development Strategy 2020-24 (Appendix B)
- 3.2 As outlined in the original report to Cabinet in July 2020, that the progress to date will be communicated publically to our residents
- 3.3 The significant corporate effort over the last three months that has resulted in a substantial level of progress made against the plans.
- 3.4 The impact of external factors on some of the areas of delivery. Where this is the case, the areas have been reviewed to reflect the current environment during Quarter 1. The focus on delivery within the life of the plans remains a corporate commitment.

#### **Further information**

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**Report approved by:** Donna Nolan, Managing Director

## **4.0 Detailed proposal**

### **4.1 A refreshed strategic framework**

4.2 The council has an ambitious agenda for Watford and recognises that a focused, and aligned, strategic framework is fundamental to the successful delivery of its plans for the town.

4.3 In summer 2020, the council reviewed and refreshed its strategic framework to better reflect these ambitions as well as the Mayor's Manifesto, local intelligence, community feedback and best practice. The renewed framework, comprising the council's key strategies and plans, confirms our focus on what is important to the town and its residents and that resources are allocated to its priority commitments.

4.4 A critical part of the successful delivery of the renewed framework is robust, and regular, monitoring and reporting of the associated plans including:

- the Council Plan 2020-24 and Delivery Plan 2020-22;
- the Organisational Development Strategy 2020-24 and Delivery Plan; and
- Covid-19 Road to Renewal Plan.

This report presents a progress update of the plans outlined in 4.4 and in associated Appendices (A and B).

4.5 Significant amount of progress has been achieved across all delivery areas. The direction set by the strategic framework has ensured services have clarity on where they need to concentrate and focus their energies and supports the council's reputation as a council that gets things done and that delivers on what is important to the town.

4.6 Running throughout the council's progress is the strengthening of our organisational approach, governance and structure. This means the council has the essential building blocks in place to support all of our activities and commitments not just across these plans but also across all of our corporate work and effort.

This has particularly focused on:

- making sure we have the right capacity to deliver;
- a renewed emphasis on integrating how we work strategically;
- making sure the way we make our decisions is transparent, timely and supported by the relevant information; and
- our organisational culture is directed to our 'one team' approach, shared ownership of our corporate priorities and commitment to deliver

4.7 All three plans were underpinned by our corporate understanding of both the external and internal environment at the time of their development. Since their

development, the council has continued to face a range of challenging external factors, which have required capacity and resources. These include the emergence and focus on the second wave of the Covid-19 pandemic and, previously, the uncertainty generated by the prospect of the Government's White Paper on Devolution and Local Recovery. The review of progress has identified where these external influences have impacted original milestones for some areas of work and where these have been reviewed during Quarter 1. Furthermore, the changing nature of the Covid-19 pandemic means the Road to Renewal Plan itself has been refreshed to ensure that it continues to meet the needs of residents and businesses as the impact of Covid-19 develops and becomes clearer and this is the subject of a separate report.

#### **4.8 Council Plan 2020-24 and Delivery Plan 2020-22**

4.8.1 The new Council Plan 2020-24 was approved by Council in July 2020 as was the associated Delivery Plan 2020-22.

4.8.2 The Plan, which covers the period 2020 – 2024, is designed to be strategic, high level and outward-facing, with an emphasis on outcome focused commitments. It describes the council's post Covid-19 era to the workforce, our communities and our partners by resetting our strategic commitments.

4.8.3 The Plan, has three themes (see below) and is underpinned by the principles of excellence; promotion; impact; enterprise; leadership and caring.

##### **Council themes:**

- A council that serves our residents
- A thriving, diverse and creative town
- A healthy and happy town

Each theme has five areas of commitment under which specific project and areas of work have been identified and articulated through the Delivery Plan 2020-22.

4.8.4 Whilst the Council Plan has a four year perspective, the Delivery Plan has been developed to focus on key priorities to 2022. The 18 month perspective means that the Council can be flexible and agile to respond to emerging and future challenges and opportunities and the initial Delivery Plan has a steadfast focus on the work to support our community, businesses and staff as they recover from Covid-19.

4.8.5 By reporting regularly to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the progress made by the organisation against the Council Plan and, particularly the Delivery Plan, we can ensure we are continuing to focus our resources on what is important to our town and community. It also provides transparency and clear accountability to our community.

4.9 **Tracking progress on the Council Plan – 2020-24 / Delivery Plan – 2020-22**

4.9.1 In July 2020, the recommendation to report on progress on the Council Plan and Delivery Plan to Cabinet on a quarterly basis was approved by Council.

4.9.2 The fourth update, covering quarter one of the 2021/22 year, is at Appendix A. This identifies all the Delivery Plan commitments, the project delivering the activity and progress made during the first year of the Council Plan. The Executive Head of Strategy and Communications and the Head of the EPMO are continuing to coordinate the organisational response to the Council Plan and Delivery Plan, working closely with services to promote a shared corporate understanding and ownership of our commitments, reflecting our new culture and ways of working.

4.10 **Overview / highlights**

4.10.1 Overall, there are 62 areas of work / projects identified within the Delivery Plan 2020-22.

4.10.2 The council completed or has made significant progress against a number of important projects during the first year of the Delivery Plan. Highlights include:

<b>A council that serves its residents</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New waste and recycling service launched Just under 14,000 residents have signed up for the new green waste service, including a large proportion using the digital MyWatford platform.</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New Organisational Development Strategy developed and approved, designed to support staff to deliver the best service for residents and businesses (see section 4.11-4.13 and Appendix B).</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The reset of finances to mitigate the initial known impact of Covid-19 and ensure ongoing alignment with the council’s priorities as detailed within the Council Plan. It should be noted that work will continue in this area as the incident develops.</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• New internal governance structure for the council established to allow for agile but robust decision making and a renewed focus on strategy and commercialisation</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A number of key leases agreed at Croxley Business Park, attracting and retaining businesses within the local area and supporting the council's financial recovery</li> </ul>	<p><b>Completed</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Completion of our Business Intelligence Strategy along with the implementation of the council's Business Intelligence platform with the first services now using the system to enable ongoing high quality delivery of services.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Initial work completed. Further activity underway</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Our Reimagining Watford project, as a key strand within the Town Hall Quarter programme, has commenced and looks to ensure that we maximise upon the benefits of more agile working whilst recognising the need for an ongoing collaborative space for staff. As staff return to the office, we have been engaging with our Staff Ambassadors Group and using the results of our staff surveys to understand the space whilst would allow our staff to deliver the best service to residents and businesses. Work to return to the office is now underway with some decluttering of the existing work spaces commenced.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Initial work completed. Further activity underway</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Watford Borough Council have been assigned as the district lead on the 'Staying Connected' project, which is a cross organisational Herts wide initiative that aims to support people with accessing information technology devices/kit and assist with training to help get them digitally connected to reduce social isolation. Support is now available for Watford residents who are digitally excluded either through lack of access to technology or digital skills and the project is gradually increasing both the number of devices available and volunteers who can provide training throughout the remainder of the year to ensure that as many residents as possible who need support are able to access the scheme.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Commenced</b></p>
<p><b>A thriving, diverse and creative town</b></p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A covid-safe High Street reopened, with ongoing advice and guidance for all businesses to ensure that they operate safely and residents and visitors are kept safe.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Completed</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Town Hall Quarter programme developed into a comprehensive single programme to regenerate the area at</li> </ul>	<p><b>Commenced</b></p>

the north end of the High Street, ensure a sustainable future for the Town Hall and Colosseum, develop a refreshed heritage and museum service and adopt new ways of working for the council.	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business forums and partnerships reviewed and implementation of recommendations underway to ensure that the council has the best support in place for businesses of all sizes across the town.</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Business support partnership with Wenta agreed and launched.</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Economic Development Strategy to underpin the council's long term support for businesses and the local economy approved. This vision and strategy for economic development for Watford (that embraces economic growth, environmental sustainability, social equity and inclusive growth) will be formally launched in October alongside a new 'branding and narrative for Watford' to promote the town effectively.</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Key accounts programme developed and launched. Tranche two and three of the programme now underway.</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>New CRM for Business system launched allowing ongoing engagement with businesses across the borough</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market successfully refurbished within budget and new 'Market Lates' event launched 3 September to bring food, music and entertainment and promote the market as a place to shop, eat, drink and be entertained.</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place Shaping Panel recruited, formed to support high quality design for development across the borough</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Riverwell Multi-storey car park construction</li> </ul>	<b>Commenced</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>£3.7m awarded to the council to assist in the decarbonisation of the Town Hall and Colosseum, contributing to the council's target of achieving a greener organisation. Initial discovery work has now commenced on-site with completion expected by March 2022.</li> </ul>	<b>Commenced</b>

<b>A happy and healthy town</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Oxhey Activity Park opened to the public, including a BMX track, children’s playground, skate park, café and wildflower meadow. Car Park extension open and maintenance now handed over to Veolia.</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Watford Rough Sleeper Task Force launched with attendees from a large number of agencies who all committed to work collectively and operationally to provide packages of accommodation and support for individual rough sleepers that enables them to leave the streets permanently and sustainably</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Voluntary sector review, alongside the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group, with significant engagement amongst the sector completed, and a final report to Cabinet on 9 November. Delivery of the Strategy is now underway.</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complex Needs Supported Housing Scheme at Brindle Court open and operational</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Design team appointed for Woodside Sports Village, a refreshed outdoor space to provide new sports and leisure facilities in the town. Designs remain ongoing with engagement from clubs on-site.</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Member led scrutiny task group report back to Cabinet with recommendations to ensure that the council is actively tackling issues of importance to Watford’s BAME community</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Public Realm works in St Albans Road and across the Watford Junction forecourt finished</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Virtual outreach via zoom music and entertainment shows to those living with dementia in care homes and the community</li> </ul>	<b>Completed and ongoing</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Dementia Admiral Nurses to provide referrals, signposting and promotion of services with a focus on raising awareness, reducing isolation post covid lockdown</li> </ul>	<b>Commenced</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Two successful Super Sunday COVID vaccination clinics held at Watford FC’s Vicarage Road ground enabling c.3,000 residents to get vaccinated and increasing the take-up of inoculations across Watford.</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Single Homelessness Pathway launched to bring together all the separate temporary accommodation providers into a multi-agency ‘team’ and work collaboratively to provide a holistic view of Watford’s approach to accommodating and supporting single homeless people and the end-to-end journey they take.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Commenced and ongoing</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work to design a memorial for front line covid workers has also progressed with an artist selected, a site at the hospital chosen and some funding secured. In addition, a tree memorial will be planted close to the band stand in Cassiobury Park as part of the Queen’s Jubilee Green Canopy as a new place of reflection for residents.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Commenced and ongoing</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As part of the Town Hall Quarter programme, Haley Sharpe design Ltd have been appointed to assist with the new design for the museum and the initial review of potential space in the Town Hall. The Town Hall Quarter business case is currently being developed for a move to the Town Hall which would create a refreshed and vibrant museum offer for residents and visitors of all ages.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Commenced and ongoing</b></p>

**4.11 Organisational Development Strategy 2020-24 and associated Delivery Plan**

- 4.11.1 The Council Plan identifies the Organisational Development Strategy as a priority area of work under the theme ‘A council that serves our residents’ with the related commitment to ‘Empower leaders at all levels in our council to inspire our organisation and our community’.
- 4.11.2 The council recognises our staff are critical to our success and to building our reputation as a council that delivers. At the same time, we know that the commitment of our staff and their passion for public service ensures we keep our residents, our businesses and community at the heart of everything we do. The importance of effectively matching our resources (both financial and staff) to the ambitions of our Council Plan and Delivery Plan was recognised when the plans were presented to Cabinet in July with an aligned budget update and a new Organisational Development Strategy 2020-24.
- 4.11.3 The Organisational Development Strategy is also supported by a Delivery Plan, which translates the high level, strategic approach to how we develop our staff into practical and timely actions.

#### 4.12 Tracking progress on the Organisational Development Strategy 20-2024

4.12.1 In July 2020, the recommendation to report on progress on the Organisational Development Strategy on a quarterly basis was approved by Cabinet. Aligning progress reporting to Cabinet on the delivery plans for the Council Plan and the Organisational Development Strategy will retain the synergy between the plans and support the effective governance for the council’s strategic framework.

4.12.2 The second update on the Organisational Development Strategy, covering Q1 of 2021/22, is at Appendix B. It should be noted that the delivery of a number of items have been reviewed. These predominantly relate to work dependent on the internal work to values and behaviour which, since the creation of the Organisational Development Strategy, have been aligned to the Town Hall Quarter programme and will be delivered through the Reimagining Watford project. However, a Project Manager is in place and engagement across the organisation has now commenced which will help to ensure that our values and behaviours have buy-in from across the council and are embedded. Similarly, initiatives which required face to face interaction have been unable to progress due to government restrictions and our internal risk assessments, designed to keep staff safe. These activities will be reviewed when the risk assessments change.

#### 4.13 Overview / highlights

4.13.1 The council completed a number of areas of work relating to Organisational Development Strategy. Highlights include:

• Staff Ambassadors’ Group established	<b>Completed</b>
• Steps taken to improve the number of managers who feel confident to spot the early warning signs of mental health and have the skills to manage those conversations with additional training now provided to all line managers	<b>Completed</b>
• Mental health first aid training for colleagues, enabling them to spot the signs and offer support.	<b>Completed</b>
• Evaluation of pilot health check programme (Community Protection team).	<b>Completed</b>
• People policies (particularly health and safety and flexible working) are reviewed to optimise agile working. <i>Several policies have already been reviewed updated and published.</i>	<b>Completed Phase 1</b>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• i-perform launched 1 October as new check-in (1:1 meetings) and annual review platform. This will incorporate development discussions and a section for recording skills to kick start the central database of staff skills and abilities.</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• ‘Time to Talk’ initiative rolled out to all staff and undertaken on three occasions, pairing colleagues together to connect in a way that has not been possible since the pandemic started.</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Joined the Kickstart scheme through the Chamber of Commerce and a number of Kickstart candidates have now started working in Communications and the Enterprise Programme Management Office</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recruitment of Executive/Group Head Assistant has completed with two people taking up their roles in Nov 2020 and the remaining two at the start of the 2021 financial year.</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Additional Mental Health first Aiders recruited and trained</li> </ul>	<b>Commenced</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pilot Reimagining Watford workshop held with the Staff Ambassador Group</li> </ul>	<b>Completed</b>

#### 4.14 **Road to Renewal Plan**

4.14.1 The Renewal Plan is intrinsically linked to the Council Plan and Delivery Plan and provides the strategic link to the council’s ambitions for the renewal of the town, and the organisation, following the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic.

4.14.2 The Road to Renewal Plan was launched in July 2020, alongside the Council Plan, Delivery Plan and Organisational Development Strategy. Since this time, the impact of Covid-19 has evolved and more is now known about how it will affect our community in the short and longer term. We have always known that, in order to be responsive and reflective of the impact on Watford, the Road to Renewal Plan must remain agile and flexible and able to adapt to the changing needs of residents and businesses, particularly given that the recovery from Covid-19 is unlikely to follow the steps of a traditional recovery with the situation still far from certain. As such, a review and refresh of the Road to Renewal plan has taken place to ensure that it continues to best meet the needs of the community, our residents and our businesses. As a result, further emphasis and focus will be provided in areas such as the health and wellbeing of residents, equipping our residents to access employment opportunities and addressing digital isolation. The council will also work with neighbouring authorities and the County Council to ensure that our renewal work is aligned to a Hertfordshire-wide position. This refreshed plan is subject to a separate report.

## **5.0 Implications**

### **5.1. Financial**

5.1.1 The Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy is aligned with the Council Plan to ensure that the commitments within the Plan are resourced. The Council's budget underpins the whole of the Council Plan and Delivery Plan. The importance of the budget is recognised under the theme 'A Council that serves our residents' with the related commitment being 'Focus our budget to deliver on our commitments and secure investment to work for Watford'.

5.1.2 A Renewal Fund of £1.2m was agreed by Council at its meeting on 14 July 2020 to support the delivery of the Road to Renewal Plan. This recognises that this work is essential in supporting the town's response to Covid-19. The use of the Fund is being monitored by the Head of the EPMO and Finance and is reported regularly to the council's Renewal Coordination Board, which comprises the Managing Director and other senior officers.

As at 23 January 2021, there was £687k remaining in the Fund. It has been used to support the Business Recovery and Growth programme, the business CRM system, social distancing measures in the High Street, the creation of the Voluntary Sector and Economic Growth strategies and project management resource. However, since then it has been possible to reallocate the cost of some of these schemes to the ARG fund. Further commitments made include the outdoor theatre in Cassiobury Park, the night market and works at Watford Junction. As a result, there is now £714k remaining in the Fund as of 8 September 2021.

5.1.3 The Shared Director of Finance comments that there are no further financial implications arising from the contents of this report.

### **5.2 Legal issues**

5.2.1 The Council Plan is one of the policy framework documents listed in the constitution that has to be approved by Council. The plan was approved by Council on 14 July 2020.

### **5.3 Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

5.3.1 An Equality Impact Analysis (EIA) was developed for the Council Plan 2020-2024. This is consistently reviewed based on up to date information and data the council receives to ensure the council meets its public sector equalities under the s149 (1) of the Equality Act 2010.

EIAs were also developed for the Organisational Development Strategy 2020-24

and for the Road to Renewal Plan. These will also this will be monitored through the life of the respective strategies.

#### 5.4 **Staffing**

- 5.4.1 The Council Plan sets the Council's strategic direction, and is, therefore, a key document for staff, enabling them to understand our commitments and priorities and allowing them to contribute fully to our success and achievements. As the overarching plan for the Council, it provides the framework for all our strategies and policies and links, through the Delivery Plan, to service business plans and individual staff objectives and outcomes. The principles demonstrate how we go about our work and are an important guide for staff on the Council's expectations recognising it is not just what we deliver but how we deliver that is a measure of our organisational culture.

The Organisational Development Strategy supports the Council Plan and Delivery Plan to equip all staff to be their very best.

#### 5.5 **Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

- 5.5.1 Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 requires the Council to give due regard to the likely effect of the exercise of its functions on crime and disorder in its area and to do all it reasonably can to prevent these. Our theme: A happy and healthy town, underpins our commitment to 'Work even more closely with the voluntary and community sector, to build a resilient community where people support each other' and the associated action to 'ensure a safer Watford;' by working with partners and using our statutory powers.

#### 5.6 **Sustainability**

- 5.6.1 The council's commitment to sustainability runs through the Council Plan and a range of actions to deliver our climate change commitments are identified within the Delivery Plan. These range from pushing forward with delivering greener ways to travel in Watford to promoting Watford's transition to a low-carbon economy.

### **Appendices**

- Appendix A – Council Plan 2020-24 / Delivery Plan 2020-22 progress update September 2021
- Appendix B – Organisational Development Strategy 2020-24 progress update September 2021



# Watford Borough Council Delivery Plan

## Progress Update

### THEME 1: A council that serves our residents

#### Key achievements over this period

- Watford Borough Council have been assigned as the district lead on the 'Staying Connected' project, which is a cross organisational Herts wide initiative that aims to support people with accessing information technology devices/kit and assist with training to help get them digitally connected to reduce social isolation. Support is now available for Watford residents who are digitally excluded either through lack of access to technology or digital skills and the project is gradually increasing both the number of devices available and volunteers who can provide training throughout the remainder of the year to ensure that as many residents as possible who need support are able to access the scheme.
- Our Reimagining Watford project, as a key strand within the Town Hall Quarter programme, has commenced and looks to ensure that we maximise upon the benefits of more agile working whilst recognising the need for an ongoing collaborative space for staff. As staff return to the office, we have been engaging with our Staff Ambassadors Group and using the results of our staff surveys to understand the space, which will support our staff whilst also allowing them to deliver the best service to residents and businesses. Work to return to the office is now underway with some decluttering of the existing work spaces commenced. The council is monitoring any government / NHS advice on Covid secure working and has steps in place to ensure the health and safety of staff, members and customers.
- Completed refurbishment of suites in buildings 4 & 6 at Croxley Business Park – vacant industrial stocks now limited as everything else under offer which marks a positive position from this time last year.
- Following a successful business continuity planning process, the council has been able to retain delivery of the vast majority of services permitted by government guidance during the second and third national Covid-19 lockdowns.
- Outturn report completed and understatement of c.£0.2m compared to last budget.
- The council's Business Intelligence platform has been implemented and the first services, including HR and the EPMO, are using the system. A further app to monitor all WBC projects and programmes, and record progress against the Council Plan, has now been launched and work is underway to create information dashboards for services across the council.
- Successfully connected our Business Intelligence platform to a Customer Service Centre data source to enable real time reporting.

## Theme BRAG Analysis

BRAG rating	Key	Total number in theme
Completed	Completed	3
On track	On track	14
Planning underway	Planning underway	0
Delayed / Unknown	Delayed / Unknown	0
	Delivery reprofiled as a result of external influences	1
<b>Total</b>		<b>18</b>

COMMITMENT		Project	Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Make sure our council is a caring and collaborative organisation that puts what matters to people at the heart of everything we do					
<b>1. Provide an excellent customer experience</b>	We will deliver a new Customer Experience Strategy covering the next 5 years to ensure that we provide an excellent end-to-end customer experience across all our services.	Customer Experience Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September '20- Research and analyse data sources</li> <li>✓ November '20 – Strategy development</li> <li>✓ November '20- Present draft strategy to Strategic Board</li> <li>• October '21 - Engage Leadership Board &amp; Portfolio Holders</li> <li>• October '21 – Strategy approved by Leadership Board</li> <li>• Nov '21 – Strategy approved by Cabinet</li> </ul>	Delivery Reprofiled	The Customer Experience Strategy will be supported by engagement with members, residents, businesses and officers as it is a critical part of ensuring that our customers remain firmly at the heart of what we do. The draft strategy is complete and an initial discussion held at the council's Strategic Group. Subsequent research and analysis of data services has been delayed to take account of the impact of the pandemic on future customer behaviour but the strategy will

					now be taken forward for internal and external consultation prior to approval by cabinet. External consultation will be a qualitative piece of engagement with a focus on specific customer groups, those who have more specific needs such as those who are 60+ or have disabilities.
<b>2. Ensure a continual focus on customer needs</b>	We know our customer needs constantly change, so we will continually review the services we are providing to our residents and businesses, ensuring we make the most of new technology without overlooking those who require a personal service	Customer Experience Strategy	Milestones subject to Customer Experience Strategy (above)	On track	This activity forms an integral part of most Service Plans and remains an ongoing action across the council. The development of the Customer Experience Strategy will drive forward this commitment and outline some focused activity to deliver this commitment. The past 16 months have been a great example of how the council constantly adapts to ensure that we continue to meet the needs of our customers.
<b>3. Address digital isolation</b>	We will work with our partners, volunteers and community groups to support residents who do not have access to technology or do not currently have the skills to use IT so that they have the same opportunities as others in our town.	Watford Helps (Road to Renewal Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ January '21 – Develop job descriptions for 'Digital Navigators'</li> <li>✓ May '21 – Develop eligibility criteria for devices</li> <li>✓ May'21 - Develop process for accessing, cleaning and distributing IT kit and Herts wide digital support map / database</li> </ul>	On track	The approach to this project has been changed and is being delivered through a county wide, cross organisational 2 year programme involving Hertfordshire County Council, the NHS Trusts, Voluntary Sector organisations including the CVS's and relevant charities as well as

			✓ September '21 – Deploy approved approach		district and borough councils (WBC is the lead council for LAs across the county). Support is now available for Watford residents who are digitally excluded either through lack of access to technology or digital skills and the project is gradually increasing both the number of devices available and volunteers who can provide training throughout the remainder of the year to ensure that as many residents as possible who need support are able to access the scheme.
<b>COMMITMENT</b> Deliver high quality sustainable services		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<b>1. Deliver a new Waste and Recycling offering for Watford</b>	We will deliver the new waste and recycling service to cut waste, increase recycling and ensure the sustainability of our service.	Waste and Recycling Service Review	✓ 1 September '20 – New service launched	<b>Complete</b>	The new waste and recycling service launched on 1 September 2020. This included a new chargeable green waste service which just under 14,000 households have signed up to (85% via our online form). The town has seen increased levels of recycling following the service change.
<b>2. Embed a continuous</b>	We know that our customers value great and easy access to excellent services. We	Continuous Improvement	✓ September '20 – Begin to gather insight	<b>On track</b>	The need for continuous improvement and providing the

<p><b>improvement approach across all of our services.</b></p>	<p>will develop a new approach to ensure that we learn from leading practice and our changing customer needs and challenge ourselves to continually improve to deliver excellent, high quality services to our residents and businesses.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September '20 - Develop and deploy ongoing improvements</li> <li>✓ February '21 - Develop methodology</li> <li>✓ April '21 - Develop Business Intelligence dashboard</li> <li>✓ April '21 - Develop prioritised improvement timeline</li> <li>• Sep 2020 - Feb 2022 - Develop and deploy ongoing improvements</li> </ul>		<p>very best service to our customers is already an integral part of the work that all services undertake. The continuous improvement process model for customer facing services is now established through regular service meetings to review the provision of services across all access channels. All feedback, volumetrics and other data is reviewed at these meetings with improvement actions agreed and prioritised and progress against the improvements identified monitored. This methodology will be reviewed in February to ensure it remains fit for purpose in view of the growing number of process available through both our online and telephone channels.</p>
<p><b>3. Manage our organisational renewal post Covid-19</b></p>	<p>We will support the council to bounce back from Covid-19, addressing any backlogs and learning from ways of working during the emergency to ensure that we make the most of new opportunities to meet our resident and customer expectations.</p>	<p>Remobilisation (Road to Renewal Plan)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 6 July '20– Road to Renewal Plan approved by Cabinet</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>All additional milestones captured with our Road to Renewal plan. The council's first Road to Renewal plan was approved by Cabinet in July 2020 and progress has been tracked through regular updates to Cabinet alongside the whole of the strategic framework. It should be noted that a refresh of the Road to Renewal plan is</p>

					currently underway to align with the challenges which have arisen following a year of the pandemic, which will include the impact on the organisation itself.
<b>COMMITMENT</b> Empower leaders at all levels in our council to inspire our organisation and our communities.		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<b>1. Introduce a new Organisational Development approach</b>	We want to make sure that we develop, motivate and inspire our staff whilst ensuring that they feel supported and empowered to do their best for our residents and businesses. To do this, we will develop a new approach to Organisational Development which will recognise the strengths and commitment of our staff whilst helping them to work as one team in the best interests of our town, residents and businesses. We will ensure that our approach protects their health and wellbeing and that it provides opportunities for genuine two-way engagement.	Organisational Development Strategy	✓ 6 July – Organisational Development Strategy approved by Cabinet	On track	All additional milestones and progress updates captured within Appendix B – Organisational Development Quarterly Update.
<b>2. Improve our internal decision making so that it is agile and effective</b>	Learning from the experience of Covid-19, we will ensure our internal governance structures allow us to make well-considered, transparent decisions as quickly as possible to support our ambition to react	Organisational Renewal (Road to Renewal Plan)	✓ 30 July '20 – Internal engagement relating to governance processes complete ✓ 1 September '20 - New internal governance structure in place	Complete	New internal governance approach in place from September 2020 to ensure robust but agile decision making and a clear and renewed focus.

	efficiently to deliver our commitments to our residents and community.		and corporate communications circulated		
<b>3. Improve succession planning and talent management and recruitment</b>	We will ensure that we open up opportunities for staff to build their skills, experience and knowledge so that working for our town can be a fulfilling and professional career. Where we do need to recruit, we will ensure we recruit the very best candidates from those that apply and represents the diverse backgrounds of our residents.	Organisational Development Strategy	✓ 6 July '20 – Organisational Development Strategy approved by Cabinet	On track	All additional milestones and progress updates captured within Appendix B – Organisational Development Quarterly Update.
<b>COMMITMENT</b> Focus our budget so we can deliver on our commitments and secure investment to work for Watford		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<b>1. Ensure our investment portfolio delivers maximum value to the council</b>	We will ensure that we are actively managing our investment portfolio, including exploring new opportunities to protect our income levels, manage risk and maximise value over the longer term, so that we can continue to provide high quality services to our residents and businesses.	Investment Portfolio (Road to Renewal Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 23 July '20 - Compare latest quarter rent/investment collections with pre-Covid quarters</li> <li>✓ 10 August '20 – outstanding market rent letters sent</li> <li>✓ 15 August '20 - Intu rent receipt not received</li> <li>✓ 7 September '20 – Regus rent extension agreed at PIB</li> <li>✓ 20 October '20 - LSH quarterly update report to Commercial Income and Investment Board</li> <li>✓ 1 November '20 – Additional occupation of CBP premises</li> </ul>	On track	<p>Further refurbishments have completed at Croxley Business Park and monitoring of quarterly rent receipts and comparison with previous quarters remains ongoing. The June RPI has been confirmed, enabling the annual review of head lease.</p> <p>Watford Centre Ltd has agreed and completed a surrender premium with John Lewis at Atria, and WBC has now received the majority of this premium,</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 30 November '20 – Ongoing monitoring of intu rent income</li> <li>✓ 02 December '20 - Cabinet approval for the refurbishment of the Croxley Business park units</li> <li>✓ 16 December '20 – CIIB approved Croxley Business park refurb</li> <li>✓ 8 February '21– Cabinet approval for the letting of Building 1 at Croxley Business Park</li> <li>✓ 1 March '21 – Cabinet approval to the Croxley BP Business Plan for 2021/22</li> <li>✓ March '21 Completion of procurement for external legal support at Croxley Business Park</li> <li>✓ June '21 – Review of Croxley Business Park income model</li> <li>✓ July '21 – Premium from John Lewis site received</li> <li>✓ August '21 – Refurbishments of buildings 4 &amp; 6 completed</li> <li>• September '21 – Receipt of balance of John Lewis premium</li> <li>• October '21 – Final sale of Gade car park expected</li> <li>• October '21 – Decision expected from interested party on 935 High St proposal</li> </ul>		<p>with the balance expected in September.</p> <p>Atria seeing encouraging volumes from leisure and event businesses since lockdown ended on 19 July, in line with expected change in consumer behaviours post-Covid.</p>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>November'21 – Atria pay-over due</li> </ul>		
<b>2. Assess the feasibility of Growth Fund</b>	We will assess the feasibility of using our financial strength to support economic growth and an investment return through investing in start-up and growth opportunities.	Revive (Road to Renewal Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q4 2020 – Q4 2021 - Working with investment advisors to undertake a programme of work</li> </ul>	On track	This work will form part of the commercial pipeline overseen by the Executive Head of Commercial Finance and Innovation. The council continues to investigate the feasibility of an Innovation and Incubation Hub in the town as part of the Town Hall Quarter programme, which will help to support start-ups.
<b>3. Deliver the council's financial recovery</b>	We will reset our finances in the light of the pressures created by COVID-19 and based on insight about possible future pressures which will allow us to fund priorities to help Watford recover.	Financial Resilience (Road to Renewal Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 14 July '20- Budget reset discussions at Council</li> <li>✓ 10 September '20 - Budget strategy review at Portfolio Holders and Heads of Service</li> <li>✓ 23 September '20- Review base budget adjustments</li> <li>✓ 12 October '20– Growth bids and savings proposals for 2021/22 due from services</li> <li>✓ November '20 - Assessment of growth bids and savings proposal underway in preparation for the budget setting cycle.</li> <li>✓ 14 December '20– PH's discussed budgets</li> <li>✓ January '21 – Financial Scrutiny Committee to review budgets (BAU)</li> </ul>	Initial activity completed but work ongoing	<p>Ongoing management of budgets and planning for impact of Covid on future financial years. However, this will need to continue as the town emerges from future lockdowns or tiered restrictions.</p> <p>MTFS to be considered by Council in January 2022.</p>

<p><b>4. Manage the council finances</b></p>	<p>We will ensure that our budgets align with our priorities and that budget management is robust, forward-looking and supports the best possible service outcomes for the money we have available.</p>	<p>Financial Resilience (Road to Renewal Plan)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 14 July '20 - Budget reset discussions at Council</li> <li>✓ 10 September '20 - Budget strategy review at Portfolio Holders and Heads of Service</li> <li>✓ 23 September '20 - Review base budget adjustments</li> <li>✓ 12 October '20 – Growth bids and savings proposals for 2021/22 due from services</li> <li>✓ November '20 - assessment of growth bids and savings proposals in preparation for the budget setting cycle.</li> <li>✓ January '21 – 2021/22 budget setting process completed</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>Ongoing management of budgets and planning for impact of Covid on future financial years. This will continue as the incident develops and the final impact of Covid-19 remains uncertain at the current time.</p> <p>MTFS to be considered by Council in January 2022.</p>
<p><b>COMMITMENT</b> Welcome innovation, technology and new ways of working to continuously improve</p>		<p><b>Project</b></p>	<p><b>Key Milestones</b></p>	<p><b>'RAG' Rating</b></p>	<p><b>Update</b></p>
<p><b>1. Ensure that our use of digital technology matches our ambition to deliver the best possible service to our residents</b></p>	<p>We will deliver a new ICT strategy for the next five year period to ensure that we are making the most of new ICT and digital opportunities.</p>	<p>ICT Strategy</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q3/Q4 2021/22 – Development of strategy underway for approval at Cabinet</li> </ul> <p>All future milestones will be dependent on the Strategy but implementation is anticipated from early 2022 onwards. However, in effect delivery of the strategy has already commenced with the building of the Office 365 tenancy. This was expedited to support some</p>	<p>On track</p>	<p>The development of the council's ICT strategy (2022 to 2027) is underway with delivery of the document expected in early 2022 This will build upon the huge progress made over the period of the last strategy which saw the completion of the core infrastructure programme, the roll out of laptops for all staff and the introduction of the highly successful unified</p>

			<p>Covid related work, including the deployment of Microsoft Teams to a small group of individuals and to further support a likely requirement for Community Protection staff to access a Covid related system within the HCC cloud based data centres.</p>		<p>communications platform which has allowed all staff to continue working throughout Covid-19 with minimal impact on services.</p>
<p><b>2. Deliver our Business Intelligence Strategy</b></p>	<p>We will improve how the council uses data and information to support well-informed decisions, improve performance and provide a better customer experience. We will use this information to monitor the delivery of our services for customers and to take action if something needs improving.</p>	<p>Business Intelligence</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ October '20 - Draft strategy ready for organisational review and socialisation October 2020</li> <li>✓ February '21 – Strategy approved by Leadership Board. To be reviewed by Cabinet alongside the Customer Experience Strategy</li> <li>• Future milestones are due to be agreed through discussions with services</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>The first draft of Business Intelligence Strategy has been prepared. The council's Business Intelligence platform has been implemented and the first services are using the system. The App to monitor all WBC projects and programmes, and record progress against the Council Plan, has now been completed and work continues to develop a Customer Experience dashboard, covering a wide range of areas including complaints and customer contact, with completion expected in September 2021. We are currently developing a new reporting methodology using the business intelligence platform to partially automate the production of KPI reports, and increase the scope for better analysis of performance, and more engaging ways to present KPI data to stakeholders.</p>

<p><b>3. Ensure that the council's future office accommodation is fit for purpose</b></p>	<p>Learning the lessons from Covid-19 and listening to our staff, we will develop plans to ensure the council has a modern, fit for purpose, sustainable and good value for money offices to work from.</p>	<p>Organisational Development Strategy (Also linked to High Street North / Cultural Hub works)</p>	<p>✓ 6 July '20 – Organisational Development Strategy approved by Cabinet</p>	<p>On track</p>	<p>All additional milestones and progress updates captured within Appendix B – Organisational Development Quarterly Update. It should be noted that this activity is being delivered through the Town Hall Quarter programme which was initiated in January 2021. Engagement is underway with all staff as part of our Reimagining Watford project but the ambition is to create a workspace which is fit for the future, supports collaborative working and allows our staff to provide the very best service to our residents and businesses</p>
<p><b>4. Enhance agile ways of working for our staff</b></p>	<p>We will ensure that our staff are able to provide high quality and efficient services to customers when they want them by opening up opportunities for staff to work remotely or in an agile way, helping the council to become an employer of choice.</p>	<p>Agile Working</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• September '21 – Team office clearing and decluttering</li> <li>• September / October '21 – Agile Charters and Reconnecting Bubbles</li> <li>• October '21 – Piloting agile working</li> <li>• Mid 2022 – Move to new agile space</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>Our Reimagining Watford project, as a key strand within the Town Hall Quarter programme, looks to ensure that we maximise upon the benefits of more agile working whilst recognising the need for an ongoing collaborative space for staff. As staff return to the office, we have been engaging with our Staff Ambassadors Group and using the results of our staff surveys to understand the space whilst would allow our staff to deliver the best service to residents and businesses. Work to return to the</p>

					office is now underway with some decluttering of the existing work spaces commenced so that it is more aligned to agile working.
<b>5. Embed resilience across the organisation</b>	We will ensure that our staff are planning ahead and have the necessary information, understanding and agility to manage any future disruption to services and learn from this.	Resilience (Road to Renewal Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 6 July '20 - Report to SLT on lessons learnt from first wave response</li> <li>✓ 31 July '20 – Updated business continuity plans template agreed and instructions for review and second lockdown scenario planning circulated</li> <li>✓ 31 August '20 – All Business Continuity Plans updated</li> <li>✓ 14 September '20 - Report to LB on second wave preparations</li> <li>✓ 21 September '20 - Report to PHs on second wave preparations</li> <li>✓ May '21 – Review of function completed and reviewed at Leadership Board</li> <li>• From June '21 – Delivery of recommendation of review</li> </ul>	On track	Business continuity plans across the council have been updated to reflect the lessons learnt from the first wave of Covid-19. Plans for second wave preparedness were finalised and put into action effectively. This includes the impact on services and a clear and auditable process for amending services based on resource requirements or government guidance. A review of the corporate resilience approach has been completed and was discussed at the council's Leadership Board in May 2021. Planning underway to implement proposed changes in relation to emergency planning

## **THEME 2: A thriving, diverse and creative town**

### **Key achievements over this period**

- Town Hall Quarter programme developed into a comprehensive single programme to regenerate the area at the north end of the High Street, ensure a sustainable future for the Town Hall and Colosseum, develop a refreshed heritage and museum service and adopt new ways of working for the council. Significant progress made to date on potential designs and the development of associated business cases
- £3.7m awarded to the council to assist in the decarbonisation of the Town Hall and Colosseum, contributing to the council's target of achieving a greener organisation. Initial discovery work has now commenced on-site with completion expected by March 2022.
- The sale of all remaining plots at Woodlands within the Riverwell development have now completed. Construction of the Multi-Storey Car Park has commenced on site and good progress has been made to date, with practical completion expected in January 2022. Jarvis have been appointed as main contractor on Family Housing with Phase 1 set for 1st section completion in August 2023.
- Covid lockdown restrictions ended on 19 July with large volumes returning to the high street and the night-time economy in particular. July footfall data was comparable with July 2019. Our 'Summer of Fun' programme of events was held to encourage the public back to a safe town centre.
- Market successfully refurbished within budget and new 'Market Lates' event launched 3 September to bring food, music and entertainment and promote the market as a place to shop, eat, drink and be entertained.
- £0.98m paid directly to business by way of Additional Restrictions Grants by end July 2021. An additional 'top-up' of c.£0.85m funding successfully applied for enabling a further menu of grants to support local businesses, charities and young entrepreneurs across Watford.
- Watford Business Growth Grant launched with £0.5m fund to advise and support businesses with 5-10 employees – eligibility criteria being reviewed to enable more businesses to claim.
- Charitable Support Grant launched 16 August to support local charities.
- Agreement reached with the University of Hertfordshire to create and manage a Young Entrepreneurs programme to support 18-30 year olds considering setting up/already set up a business – this will be across all sectors with particular emphasis on the creative and green/sustainability sectors.
- Agreement reached with Watford Palace Theatre to manage grants as part of our Cultural Strategy delivery programme to support arts and culture.
- Expression of Interest published for tenders to manage a Low Carbon Business grant scheme encouraging businesses to lower their carbon output and associated costs.
- Economic Growth Strategy finalised and agreed by Cabinet June 2021. This vision and strategy for economic development for Watford (that embraces economic growth, environmental sustainability, social equity and inclusive growth) will be formally launched in October alongside a new 'branding and narrative for Watford' to promote the town effectively. Detailed plan created to deliver associated programme of work.

- Successful 'Welcome Back Fund' application enabling the Council to recoup some funding already spent on reopening the town safely.
- Full support provided to Chamber of Commerce-led KickStart programme to help young people at risk of long term unemployment get into the job market by providing government funding for employers to create six-month job placements. A number of placements created at the Council.

### Theme BRAG Analysis

BRAG rating	Key	Total number in theme
	Completed	5
	On track	12
	Planning underway	3
	Delayed / Unknown	2
	Delivery reprofiled as a result of external influences	0
<b>Total</b>		<b>22</b>

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COMMITMENT	Project	Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Promote Watford as an enterprising town where businesses can invest, grow and succeed				
<b>1. Drive the economic recovery of Watford</b> We will develop our Watford Survive, Revive and Thrive Recovery Plan to support the economic engine of our town as it survives COVID-19, revives and once again thrives. The Plan brings together a number of work streams to support our town through the immediate challenges that have arisen during lockdown and will help us all plan for the	Revive (Road to Renewal Plan)	✓ 17 July '20 – Develop tender brief ✓ 27 July '20 – Tender documents finalised ✓ 21 August '20 – Tender closes ✓ 10 September '20 – Supplier interviews ✓ 15 September '20 – Supplier confirmed ✓ 2 October '20 – Strategy development initiation ✓ 8 October '20 - Initial stakeholder engagement event ✓ 12 October '20 – Design survey and questions	Initial activities complete but work remains ongoing	Strategy finalised and agreed by Cabinet.  Final public document to be launched alongside new brand narrative in Autumn 2021.  Detailed Economic Delivery Plan to be managed by our enhanced Economic Development team and

	future in a very uncertain landscape to ensure Watford remains a vibrant economic hub in south west Hertfordshire.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 19 October '20 – Deliver survey and survey live period</li> <li>✓ 02 November '20 – Review survey results</li> <li>✓ 06 November '20 – Commence 1:1 stakeholder meetings</li> <li>✓ 27 November '20 – Definition of strategic priorities</li> <li>✓ 23 December '20 – First draft of strategy</li> <li>✓ 21 January '21 – Second draft of strategy</li> <li>✓ 09 February '21 – Review by Mayor/Cllrs</li> <li>✓ 11 February '21 – Review by One Watford for Business</li> <li>✓ 18 February '21 – Review by Strategy Group</li> <li>✓ 15 March '21– Final strategy received</li> <li>✓ 18 March '21 – Final review by WBC Steering Committee</li> <li>✓ 27 April '21 – Leadership Board update</li> <li>✓ 30 April '21 – Publishable docs and detailed working Action Plan complete</li> <li>✓ 07 June '21 – Review and sign-off by Cabinet</li> <li>✓ August '21 - Detailed plan and work programme created</li> <li>• Autumn '21 – Public-facing strategy published</li> </ul>		created to manage work coming out of the Growth Strategy which will inform the refreshed Road to Renewal plan.
<b>2. Re-mobilise our Town Centre and local economy and support its recovery</b>	We will continue our close working with Watford BID, intu, our businesses and other partners to position Watford town centre as the town centre of choice for our local people as well as the wider	Reopening the Town Centre (Road to Renewal Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 10 July '20– Approach to high street stewards agreed</li> <li>✓ 15 July '20 – Shop local campaign introduced</li> <li>✓ 22 July '20– Changes to pavement licensing</li> <li>✓ 15 September '20 – Enhanced track and trace roll out</li> </ul>	Initial activities complete but work remains ongoing	Local support to businesses, including in relation to public health, has continued.  Revised governance structure introduced 13 January 2021 when Town

	<p>region, making it safe, welcoming and somewhere people know they can visit to socialise, dine-out, shop and enjoy.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 12 October '20 – Officer meeting re long-term strategy for High Street traffic control</li> <li>✓ 12 October '20 – Traffic Marshals agreed to be in place until January 2021</li> <li>✓ 23 October '20 – Long-term strategy for High Street traffic control considered at RCB</li> <li>✓ October '20 – Winter planters in place to aid social distancing</li> <li>✓ 11 November '20 – Social distanced Remembrance Day</li> <li>✓ 13 November '20– Christmas light switch-on</li> <li>✓ 02 December '20 – Town centre re-opened after November lockdown – transition to 'tier' system</li> <li>✓ 02 December '20 – Covid Marshals introduced</li> <li>✓ 05 December '20 – Spectators return to Watford FC</li> <li>✓ December '20 – Comprehensive comms programme to reinforce tier messaging</li> <li>✓ 06 January '21 – Review of festive period in Town Centre</li> <li>✓ 13 January '21 – New Town Centre Operations Group structure took over</li> <li>✓ 22 February '21 – Gov't roadmap published</li> <li>✓ 08 March '21 – Gov't roadmap – schools return</li> <li>✓ March '21 – Market revamp programme commenced ahead of 13 April reopening</li> <li>✓ 29 March '21 – Gov't Roadmap – outdoor sport and leisure facilities open</li> </ul>		<p>Centre Operations Group took over responsibility to provide a real focus for the council to support the Town Centre through tactical interventions and projects. The Town Centre Strategic Forum has been established to provide the strategic direction for the town centre.</p> <p>Programme of projects now tracked at Operations Group to support businesses and encourage the public back into the town in line with the published Government Roadmap.</p> <p>Public health advice and support for businesses across the Town, but particularly in the Town Centre, has been ongoing throughout.</p> <p>In the last quarter, the Town Centre Operations Group refocussed to concentrate on tracking metrics and community objectives e.g. anti-social behaviours, begging etc to ensure we</p>
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			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 12 April '21 – Government Roadmap – outdoor hospitality, non-essential retail, gyms &amp; swims, close contact services open</li> <li>✓ From 17 April '21 – Street entertainers every Saturday</li> <li>✓ 17 May '21 – Government roadmap – indoor entertainment and indoor sport open, pilot public events</li> <li>✓ End May '21 – Summer planters installed</li> <li>✓ 19 July '21 – Government roadmap final step – nightclubs and large events open, no legal limits on social contact</li> <li>✓ 20 – 26 July '21 - BID Food &amp; Drink week</li> <li>✓ BID appointed new Christmas Lights provider</li> <li>✓ July/August '21- Summer programme of events e.g. 'Big Beach'</li> <li>✓ 03 September '21 – first 'Market Lates' event</li> <li>• Mid-November '21 – Christmas lights</li> </ul>		<p>attract the public back to the town centre.</p> <p>Final Covid legal restrictions came to an end 19 July 2021 and a Summer programme of events was held to welcome people back to our town centre and support our local businesses.</p>
<p><b>3. Invigorate our small and medium businesses across the town</b></p>	<p>We will speak regularly to our smaller and medium sized businesses and local business owners across the town. We will understand their strengths and concerns and, based on this, will produce a package of practical help, support and advice to enable them to bounce back and thrive following the impact of COVID-19 and to support them through exit from the EU.</p>	<p>Survive (Road to Renewal Plan)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ June '20 - Business Information Hub launched and communications circulated</li> <li>✓ August '20 – Review of existing forums</li> <li>✓ August '20 – Business forums recommendations approved by Informal Cabinet, including merging virtual Covid-19 group with SME business Connect</li> <li>✓ September '20 – Wenta support programme proposal approved by Renewal Coordination Board</li> <li>✓ October '20 – Final virtual Covid-19 Forum</li> <li>✓ October '20 – Wenta business support programme to launch</li> </ul>	<p>Initial activities complete but work remains ongoing</p>	<p>Business partnerships and forums review complete and all recommendations implemented to ensure that the council is best placed to support the many successful smaller businesses and business owners across the town. All first forums have been held with regular meetings scheduled. The council has continued to work hard to support local</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November '20 – Relaunch of SME Business Connect</li> <li>✓ November '20 – Relaunch Developers' Forum</li> <li>✓ January '21 – BID Ballot opens</li> <li>✓ February '21 – Inaugural One Watford for Business</li> <li>✓ April '21 – Next 'One Watford for Business' forum held</li> <li>✓ July – direct Additional Restrictions Grants paid to businesses</li> <li>✓ July – Watford Business Growth Grant launched</li> <li>✓ August – Charitable Support Grant launched</li> </ul>		<p>businesses through a range of available grants.</p>
<p><b>4. Attract and retain big business in Watford</b></p>	<p>Recognising the importance of big businesses to local employment in the town, we will introduce new ways to engage with the town's larger businesses and major employers to give them a strong voice in Watford's economic future and to support their business plans for growth. This will include moving to a key account model for our top 50 firms, providing them with a direct link to the council.</p>	<p>Thrive (Road to Renewal Plan)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ July '20 – Key businesses identified</li> <li>✓ August '20 – Business CRM tender underway</li> <li>✓ August '20 – Review of existing forums</li> <li>✓ August '20 – Business forums recommendations approved by Informal Cabinet</li> <li>✓ August '20 – Key Accounts Programme approach approved</li> <li>✓ September '20 - Leadership Team account managers assigned to businesses</li> <li>✓ September '20 – CRM supplier appointed</li> <li>✓ October '20 – existing contacts added to CRM</li> <li>✓ October '20 – CRM contract</li> <li>✓ October '20 – Introduction emails to initial 20 businesses</li> </ul>	<p>Initial activities complete but work remains ongoing</p>	<p>Key accounts scheme launched and meetings underway. All businesses involved will have regular interactions with senior council officers, with contact recorded on the business CRM system.</p> <p>Business partnerships and forums review complete and all recommendations were implemented to ensure that the town attracts and retains major employers for Watford residents.</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November '20 – CRM live</li> <li>✓ December '20 – Key Accounts Programme launched</li> <li>✓ December '20 – Business partnerships and forums review complete and all recommendations implemented</li> <li>✓ April '21 – Next 'One Watford for Business' forum held</li> <li>✓ August '21 – Business Rates data uploaded to CRM</li> </ul>		
<p><b>5. Maximise opportunities for Watford</b></p>	<p>We will work closely with local partners, including the Hertfordshire Growth Board to maximise opportunities for Watford within the County and wider sub-region. This will include joint working on schemes to benefit the whole town, such as improving the town's travel options, public spaces and schools. Our aim is to make Watford the obvious option for public investment in infrastructure to encourage economic prosperity to improve the lives of our residents and opportunities for our businesses, which will support the wider communities in Hertfordshire.</p>	N/A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Q1 and Q2 2020/21 - Spatial Options development</li> <li>✓ Q3 2021/22- Statement of Common Ground and Statement of Community Involvement across authorities to be agreed</li> <li>✓ Q3 2021/22 - Complete development of a Vision for the Joint Strategic Partnership.</li> <li>• Q4 2021/22 - Consultation on the Vision</li> </ul>	On track	<p>Continuing to contribute to the development of a strategic approach to growth in SW Hertfordshire including Watford, Dacorum, Hertsmere, Three Rivers and St Albans through ongoing work with the East/West Southern Growth Corridor Programme, the Hertfordshire Growth Board and the LEP.</p>

<b>COMMITMENT</b> Create thriving and affordable neighbourhoods and the right environment for business to flourish		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<b>1. Progress our plans for the High Street North and Cultural Hub</b>	We will take forward plans to revitalise the 'High Street north' area to create a vibrant and attractive neighbourhood for all our residents to enjoy, as well as establishing a new area in the town for culture to flourish.	High Street North	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Q2 2020 - North High Street Regeneration Study</li> <li>✓ Q3 – Q4 2020 – Identified programme of developments and strategy with the aim of identifying delivery partner/s to take scheme forward and quick wins</li> <li>✓ Q3 2020 – Approval and sign off by Cabinet</li> <li>✓ Q3 – Q4 2020 - Commencement of procurement of development partner(s) to help deliver initial development opportunities together with entering into MoUs with partners for future phases of development</li> <li>• Q3 –Q4 2020 – Detailed feasibility and discussions with stakeholders with the intention of bringing a programme business case to Cabinet in June 2022 as part of the next key gateway</li> </ul>	On track	Plans developed into the Town Hall Quarter programme, which include the regeneration of the Town Hall area / High Street North as well as improvement works to the Town Hall, Colosseum and a review of the council's internal culture and ways of working. Approval for the first stage of the programme was provided by Cabinet on 18 January 2021. Work is now underway to reach the second programme gateway to provide additional assurance in relation to feasibility and value following procurement of a Joint Venture partner, the process of which is now underway. This progress of the programme is being monitored by a Member Steering Group.
<b>2. Develop Watford Business Park</b>	We will develop Watford Business Park to create new, high quality business space	Watford Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Q3 2020 - Submit detailed planning application/commence intrusive surveys/demolition.</li> </ul>	Planning Underway	Demolition works were completed in Q1 21/22 and remediation contract awards

	and employment opportunities for local people.	Park (Zone A)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ August 2021 - Contractor appointed</li> <li>• Q1 2021/22 –Secure Cabinet approval to appoint</li> <li>• Q3 2021/22 – Main contractor appointed</li> <li>• Q4 2021/22 – Construction and preletting campaign on Gateway Zone</li> <li>• Q4 2020/21 – Q4 2021/22 – Identify further regen/commercial activities and present outline business cases to the council’s Strategic Group and member-led commercial board, once developed</li> </ul>		and works will commence in Q3 21/22 and complete in time for the main works contract, which is currently undergoing further validation, to commence in Q4 21/22.
<b>2. Create new neighbourhoods at Riverwell</b>	We will continue to develop the new and vibrant neighbourhood at Riverwell with a high quality mix of new homes, jobs, open spaces and community facilities, including a new car park for Watford General Hospital. The work at Riverwell will support the opportunity for West Hertfordshire Hospitals NHS Trust to deliver its ambition for our local hospital.	Riverwell	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Q3 2020 – Planning obtained for the Multi-Storey Car Park (MSCP) and Family Housing and tenders issued. Development of legal agreements</li> <li>✓ Q3-4 2020 – Agree marketing strategy &amp; potential turnkey development proposals for industrial zone north and progress to preparing detailed planning application</li> <li>✓ Q3-4 2020 – To complete enabling works including utility diversions on site</li> <li>✓ Q1 2021/22 – Let contract and start on site for Phase 1 of Family Housing</li> <li>• Q1/4 2020 – To continue to develop plans for remaining development zones and their integration into the hospital refurbishment/redevelopment plans</li> <li>✓ Q3 2020 – To have achieved the sale of all remaining residential units at Woodlands and initiate sale of ground lease. Advise Elections team accordingly.</li> <li>✓ Q4 2020 – To have commenced works on site on MSCP</li> </ul>	On track	<p>The new Multi-Storey Car Park onsite is under construction with practical completion expected January 2022. Jarvis has been appointed as main contractor on Family Housing with Phase 1 set for 1st section completion in August 2023.</p> <p>Completion achieved of last remaining residential unit at Woodside and sale of ground lease expected to complete shortly.</p> <p>Ongoing dialogue with WHHT on hospital redevelopment proposals following receipt of outline planning consent.</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Q3/4 2020 – Ongoing monitoring of site development through liaison with Bellway Homes and Mayfield</li> <li>• Q3-4 2020 – Liaise with HCC on legal agreements and delivery of school and ensure timetable accords with longstop</li> </ul>		
<b>3. Make the best use of our small sites</b>	We will renew sites owned by the council through the creation of new facilities for our community and new homes for local people to ensure that we are doing all we can with the land we own to provide what residents want and need.	Surplus Sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ January '21 - Approval of Programme Definition Document intended to relaunch programme and ensure programme approach to surplus sites.</li> <li>✓ March '21 - Review of sites (internally) to create prioritisation list</li> <li>• November '21 – First set of Strategic Outline Cases to be approved</li> </ul> <p>All further milestones will be subject to the approval of the above business cases</p>	On track	A number of council sites being reviewed to ensure that they work for our community. Additional resource has been identified to assist with the business cases for delivering sites.
<b>COMMITMENT</b> Ensure the right mix of facilities, services and transport links as part of new developments to create successful, well-designed new communities		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<b>1. Achieve the right long-term balance of development, services and transport links for our town</b>	We will produce and deliver a comprehensive new Local Plan for Watford which will shape how the town will develop sustainably over the next 30 years and make sure that key development sites are underpinned with creative and	Local Plan Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November '20 – Draft Local Plan to Cabinet</li> <li>✓ January '21 – Consultation underway</li> <li>✓ March '21 – Regulation 19 consultation completed</li> <li>✓ Aug '21 – Submission to Planning Inspectorate</li> <li>• January / February '22 – Local Plan examination</li> </ul>	On track	Consultation has now concluded and Local Plan submitted to Planning Inspectorate. Examination by the Inspector is scheduled for across a three week period in January / February 2022 and will

	well-considered masterplans. We will work with other Hertfordshire Councils on long term spatial plans for Hertfordshire.				ensure that the town is developed in a sustainable way over the next 30 years.
<b>2. Champion high quality design in Watford</b>	Through the creation of a Design Panel, use of our 3D model and developing planning guidance, we will expand how the council's planning function ensures that proposed development proposal designs are of a high quality.	Place Shaping Panel / Watford 3D Urban Model	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Q1 2020 - Finalise 3D model</li> <li>✓ Q1 2020 – Set up and induct the Place Shaping Design Panel</li> <li>Q2 2020 - Finalise platform for 3D model</li> <li>• Q3 2021 – Urban Design Officer starting</li> <li>• Q3 2021 - Go Live Watford Urban Design 3D model</li> <li>✓ Q2-Q4 2020– Hold regular panel meeting on a monthly basis</li> </ul>	Delivery reprofiled	Place Shaping Panel operational. 3D model finalised, but go live was delayed due to the impact of Covid-19 and lack of resources. However, a new Urban Design Officer has been recruited to review and resource the project and will be joining at in October 2021.
<b>3. Develop the Watford Junction Quarter</b>	Recognising the importance of the Watford Junction area for so many of our residents and businesses, we will bring landowners together so we can move forward with our plans to create a new Watford neighbourhood that successfully combines new homes, station facilities, jobs, public space, school provision and community facilities for both our existing and new residents.	Watford Junction Quarter	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ August '20 - Supplementary planning document for site adopted</li> <li>✓ Q2 2020 – Submit funding bid to Herts Growth Board for infrastructure interventions</li> <li>✓ Q1 2021 – Complete strategic transport review work</li> <li>✓ Q1 2021 – Procure consultants to help deliver collaborative funding and development strategy</li> <li>✓ Q2 2021 – Work with landowners to prepare collaborative funding and development strategy to commence</li> <li>• Q1 to Q4 2021 – Working with Network Rail to deliver improvements to Watford</li> </ul>	On track	The council continues to work closely with a range of stakeholders to support the development of the Watford Junction area. The council is progressing funding and development strategy work and been liaising with landowners to identify how to facilitate and unblock development. £40k funding has been secured from Homes England to support this work

			Junction station and design a publicly accessible pedestrian link across the rail lines		
<b>COMMITMENT</b> Make sure we have quality homes to meet the needs of residents, including housing that is affordable through ownership, private rental and social housing		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<b>1. Deliver our Housing Strategy</b>	We will produce and deliver a forward looking Housing Strategy so that Watford continues to offer affordable and good quality homes in thriving and sustainable neighbourhoods.	Deliver Our Housing Strategy	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q2 2022 – Complete writing draft document by end September 2022</li> <li>Q3 2022 - Consultation stakeholders, members by end December 2022</li> <li>Q4 2023 – Approval of final draft by Cabinet and Council by end June 2023</li> </ul>	Delivery reprofiled	Focus over the last period has been on the establishment of a Single Homelessness Pathway to support the council's ambition of achieving and maintaining zero rough sleepers and on the Afghan Resettlement scheme. The delivery of an updated Housing Strategy has subsequently been reprofiled but the existing strategy will be reviewed to ensure that it can continue to provide direction in the intervening period.
<b>2. Delivery of Private Sector Housing Renewal activity</b>	We will work to support the improvement of the standard of the town's privately owned homes, including ensuring regulatory compliance, particularly where this can		A number of initiatives identified to support private sector housing renewal over the period of the Delivery Plan. This will be an ongoing programme led by the council's Community Protection team and will ensure that the quality	On track	

	<p>help people's health and wellbeing.</p>	<p>External Wall Insulation</p>	<p>and standard of homes for local residents across the borough are improved.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• August '21- Delivery of External Wall Insulation projects (and other insulation measures) on site</li> <li>• December '21 - External Wall Insulation project review and close</li> </ul>		<p>External wall insulation/home insulation - Project plans are developed for each scheme as funding becomes available. The current schemes are on track. Due to covid and late award of government funding the funds were not granted until March 2021. However a project extension has also been granted until March 2022. Two projects were awarded funding; one with Bucks council and one with TRDC and WCH. Both projects have begun</p> <p>Warmer Homes - As previously reported, the original scheme has been closed, although WBC were highest performing local authority in the County. New scheme is now in development for Winter 2021.</p> <p>Minimum energy efficiency standards - MEES - funding</p>
		<p>Warmer Homes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ November: Promotion materials and processes completed and scheme advertised. Scheme commences on site.</li> <li>• Scheme runs through winter and demand tails off May '21</li> <li>• New scheme now in development for Winter 2021</li> </ul>		

		Minimum Energy Efficiency Standards BEIS	MEES Scheme set to carry over through new financial year to Mar '22 following extension of project by BEIS due to covid		from central government to pilot ways to improve energy efficiency within rental properties. Processes and surveys completed. Non-compliant rental properties without, or with low rated EPCs, will be targeted to achieve compliance using external wall insulation project areas.
		HMOs	Proactively identify those HMOs that require licensing but are not licenced. Take action to ensure that the properties are safe and licenced.		HMOs - Properties identified have been visited and follow up completed. Further investigative work underway to develop more intelligence and direct visits. Contractor has been engaged
<b>3. Review our strategic partnerships</b>	To ensure that we are making the most of our opportunities to deliver quality homes that meet the needs of local people, we will review our strategic housing partnerships and ensure that we all work together to provide quality homes for our residents.	Strategic Housing Partnerships	Continuous assessment of effective partnership arrangements and practices.	On track	The council works closely with a number of organisations to ensure that it provides quality homes for Watford residents and will continue to ensure that our partnership arrangements remain effective. Work has also now commenced on a single homelessness pathway for residents, working closely with partners to ensure a joined

					up, comprehensive approach for customers.
<b>COMMITMENT</b> Build on our new, greener ways to travel in and around Watford and promote the transition to a low carbon economy.		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<b>1. Position Watford as a Sustainable Travel Town</b>	We will consult with a range of stakeholders to develop a sustainable Transport Strategy. The Strategy will position Watford as a sustainable travel town that promotes greener ways to travel, reduces congestion, helps people to make healthy travel choices and stimulates economic growth.	Sustainable Transport Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September '20 – Board, PID and task developed</li> <li>✓ November '20 - Develop detailed project plan milestones</li> <li>✓ November '20 - Public engagement on vision</li> <li>✓ May '21 - draft strategy presented to Portfolio Holders</li> <li>✓ Aug '21 – Strategy consultation underway</li> </ul> <p>Further milestones subject to final strategy</p>	On track	Consultation of the draft of the Sustainable Transport Strategy was launched in August 2021 and is due to close at the beginning of October at which point feedback will be reviewed and amendments made, although the timelines will be dependent on the consultation results. Current initiatives of Sustainable Transport Strategy and Infrastructure Delivery Plan are contributing to progression of WBC being named a Sustainable Travel Town by HCC. We will also continue to support and lobby for Watford to have a strong connection to the HERT rapid transit scheme.

<p><b>2. Implement a demand responsive transport scheme</b></p>	<p>We will launch the ArrivaClick on demand bus service for Watford and make sure it links effectively with all of Watford's greener ways to travel so that we can reduce congestion, improve air quality and provide another sustainable but innovative way for our residents, visitors and commuters to get around.</p>	<p>Demand Responsive Transport</p>	<p>✓ July '20 – ArrivaClick demand responsive transport system launched</p>	<p>Complete</p>	<p>Revised service launched on 1 July 2020 to ensure conformity with social distancing requirements. A set of new KPI's and ridership projections have been agreed with the operator.</p>
<p><b>3. Improve the cycling and walking network in Watford</b></p>	<p>We will work with Hertfordshire County Council and our cycling community on our Local Cycling and Walking Implementation Plan to improve the cycling and walking network across our town so more people choose to cycle and walk around it. This will promote health and wellbeing, encourage residents and visitors to enjoy our public places and ensure that our town becomes greener and cleaner for everyone both now and for years to come.</p>	<p>LCWIP</p>	<p>✓ 12 April '21– LCWIP stage 3 &amp; 4 - Cycling Network and Walking Network review                  ✓ 17 May '21 - LCWIP Stage 5 - prioritisation complete</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Q2/Q3 2021 – Undertake public consultation</li> <li>• Q4 2021 – Stage 6 - final joint LCWIP document and commencement of implementation</li> </ul>	<p>Planning underway</p>	<p>Significant progress has been made since Q2 with the consultation and engagement planned for Q3 underway. Watford is continuing with Stage 4 and 5 elements of the plan and will then reconnect with Three Rivers for Stage 6 and delivery of the final LCWIP document, presented as a joint piece.</p>
<p><b>4. Champion proposals for a mass-rapid Transport Scheme for Watford</b></p>	<p>As part of our plans to encourage sustainable transport options, we will work closely with Hertfordshire Growth Board to secure the best mass rapid transport</p>	<p>Mass-Rapid Transport</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2021/22 – Hertfordshire Growth Board bid to Government for funding*</li> <li>• 2021/22 – HCC initiating parameter work to understand the options</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>High Level early stage discussions held with HCC and their consultants who are leading on the proposal for a mass rapid transport scheme in the area. The</p>

	system for our town, providing a further option for our residents, visitors and commuters to travel sustainably.		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>January / February '22 – HCC to procure for design options</li> </ul> <p><i>* dependent on opportunity</i></p>		council will continue to support the County Council in their preparation to review options for the MLX replacement and further milestones will be developed as the project progresses.
<b>5. Continue to investigate opportunities to create a low Carbon Transport Hub</b>	We will continue to investigate the potential for a low-carbon transport hub in Watford town centre to encourage more use of public transport, reducing congestion and improving air quality for everyone.	Low Carbon Transport Hub	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Engagement with HCC colleagues and BID initiated</li> <li>• 2021/22 – Land acquisition discussions and proposals</li> <li>• 2021/22 – Consider funding options to progress</li> </ul>	Planning underway	In line with the newly formed Sustainable Transport Board and the council's ongoing commitment to invest in sustainable transport for Watford residents, high level plans are continuing to investigate opportunities to create a low-carbon transport hub in Watford Town Centre. Key milestones in place over the next period which will help to establish future works.
<b>6. Make Watford a sustainable town</b>	Working with our partners, businesses and residents, we will together make Watford a more environmentally friendly town that meets the target of net zero carbon by 2030. We will continue to implement sustainable transport initiatives, support low income households and the		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ September '20 – New waste and recycling service launched</li> <li>✓ Q2-3 2020 – Warmer homes scheme underway</li> <li>✓ Q3 2020 – Funding bid to the Energy Trust for the wider roll out of electric vehicle charging and subsequent installed of 7 dual 7KW fast chargers, including in Cassiobury Park, Croxley Business Park and residential</li> </ul>	On track	There are a number of initiatives and projects underway to ensure that the council can meet the target of net zero carbon by 2030. This includes many of the innovative sustainable transport initiatives listed above, although the individual milestones have

	<p>community to improve energy efficiency, implement our Tree and Green Spaces Strategies to increase biodiversity, promote clear air campaigns and increase domestic recycling rates.</p>		<p>roads, supported by a Traffic Regulation Order</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Q3 2021 – 2020/2021 External wall insulation project for private sector housing complete.</li> <li>• Q3 2021/22 – Local Nature Reserve biodiversity action plans to be reviewed and funding opportunities identified</li> </ul>		<p>not been listed against this commitment. It should also be noted that a whole range of activities were agreed by Cabinet in March 2020 as part of the approval of the council’s Sustainability Strategy, which provides a detailed view of all the activities being undertaken to meet their commitment. A Sustainability Officer has recently been recruited who will provide additional resource to deliver the council’s Sustainability Strategy.</p>
<p><b>7. Ensure that the council is a greener organisation</b></p>	<p>We will ensure that the council is active in reducing its environmental impact and carbon footprint through our staff, our buildings and our operations. Sustainability will be integrated into our council plans, we will reduce our use of single use plastics, lead by example on low carbon travel and carry out energy audits of our council buildings.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Q4 2020 - The Council has already number of electric vehicles in the waste and parks fleet. The authority has a rolling replacement programme for these waste and street vehicles and is actively seeking to replace the diesel engines with hybrid and electric options to ensure that the target date of 2030 is achieved.</li> <li>✓ March '21 - Decarbonisation funding of £3.7m awarded</li> <li>• April '22 – Town Hall and Colosseum decarbonisation works complete</li> <li>• Expansion of the electric car provision in the Town Hall in the context of the Sustainable Transport Strategy and subject</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>Sustainable activities integrated into Service Plans across the council, approved on 13 October 2020. Further work required to establish a single plan of activity but initial milestones captured against this commitment, all of which continue to run on track. A whole range of activities were also agreed by Cabinet in March 2020 as part of the approval of the council’s Sustainability Strategy, which provides a detailed view of all the</p>

			to developments within the Town Hall Quarter. Timescales to be confirmed.		activities being undertaken to meet their commitment. A Sustainability Officer has recently been recruited who will provide additional resource to deliver the council's Sustainability Strategy.
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### **THEME 3: A healthy and happy town**

#### **Key achievements over this period**

- Single Homelessness Pathway launched to bring together all the separate temporary accommodation providers into a multi-agency ‘team’ and work collaboratively to provide a holistic view of Watford’s approach to accommodating and supporting single homeless people and the end-to-end journey they take.
- Second donation tap point to be installed in the Town Centre to actively promote public donations to combat begging and rough sleeping.
- Member led scrutiny task group has reported back to Cabinet with a number of recommendations to ensure that the council is actively tackling issues of importance to Watford’s minority communities. Some of these recommendations have already been completed whilst others will be progressed over the next quarter.
- Two successful Super Sunday Covid-19 vaccination clinics held at Watford FC’s Vicarage Road ground enabling c.3,000 residents to get vaccinated and increasing the take-up of inoculations across Watford.
- Designs continue for Woodside Sports Village, a refreshed outdoor space to provide new sports and leisure facilities in the town.
- Watford has built a strong reputation as a dementia-friendly town and accreditation has been achieved for a further two years. Support and activities for those living with dementia and their families have continued over the last period, including the Golden Memories reminiscence programme at Watford Football Club, Trishaw rides at Watford Cycle Hub and the Forget Me Not restaurant at West Herts College.
- As part of the Town Hall Quarter programme, Haley Sharpe design Ltd have been appointed to assist with the new design for the museum and the initial review of potential space in the Town Hall. The Town Hall Quarter business case is currently being developed which would create a refreshed and vibrant museum offer for residents and visitors of all ages.
- Work to design a memorial for front line covid workers has also progressed with an artist selected, a site at the hospital chosen and some funding secured. In addition, a tree memorial will be planted close to the band stand in Cassiobury Park as part of the Queen’s Jubilee Green Canopy as a new place of reflection for residents.

## Theme BRAG Analysis

BRAG rating	Key	Total number in theme
Completed	Completed	2
On track	On track	15
Planning underway	Planning underway	1
Delayed / Unknown	Delayed / Unknown	0
	Delivery reprofiled as a result of external influences	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>21</b>

COMMITMENT	Project	Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
<p>Embrace our diversity, heritage and culture to make Watford a place for people to succeed from childhood to old age</p> <p><b>1. Ensure that everyone living in our town has the opportunity to achieve their potential</b></p>	<p>Achieving Potential</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ February '21 – Member led scrutiny task group to review issues of importance to Watford's minority community and develop recommendations for Cabinet (March 2021). The task group's work includes reviewing the council's street naming policy and process.</li> <li>✓ March '21 - Encourage all communities to complete their Census 2021 returns and to underline the importance of this data in formulating future council policies.</li> <li>• June '21 – Corporate definition for ethnic minorities to be adopted</li> <li>• July '21 – Equalities Forum to be established</li> </ul>	<p>Delivery reprofiled</p>	<p>Whilst this commitment is embedded within all council Service Plans, specific activity has been undertaken by the council's Democratic Services team working with a member-led scrutiny task group to develop a range of proposals which have now been considered and agreed by Cabinet. These will be delivered over the next period but will be reprofiled to ensure sufficient engagement from the Equalities Forum and new Portfolio Holder. To date,</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• August '21 – Corporate equalities policy to be developed</li> <li>• September '21 – Equalities Impact Assessment template to be updated</li> <li>• By December '21 - Training on equalities and unconscious bias for staff and members.</li> <li>• TBC – Research has commenced with Watford Museum to develop an education programme based around a new exhibition which explores the background and history of the town's road names, subject to funding</li> </ul>		research to inform the definitions used by the council, our Corporate Equalities policy and Equalities Impact Assessment has been undertaken, providing a firm foundation for this work.
<b>2. Develop a heritage trail for Watford</b>	Recognising Watford's rich culture and past, we will celebrate the town's heritage through developing a new innovative, digital heritage trail to bring Watford's past to life.	Heritage Trail	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• February '21 – tender and commission consultant</li> <li>• March - July '21 – Strategy developed</li> </ul>	Delivery reprofiled	Project Manager in place with the development scope of works now being developed This will align with the council's wayfinding strategy with the brief developed by October 2021, reprofiled as a result of resourcing restrictions
<b>3. Review and reinvigorate how we celebrate our local heritage</b>	Develop proposals for a modern and inspiring heritage service and Museum that engages and educates our residents and visitors by telling the story of our town and its rich and diverse history.	Museum and Heritage Review	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ February '21 – tender and commission consultant</li> <li>✓ March - July '21 - deliver review on service and options appraisal</li> <li>• September '21 – Develop business case for move to the Town Hall</li> </ul>	On track	Haley Sharpe design Ltd appointed and the initial review of potential space in the Town Hall developed completed. Business case currently being developed for move to the Town Hall, as part of the Town Hall Quarter programme.

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>November '21 – RIBA Stage 2 proposals for Town Hall development and space requirements</li> </ul>		
<p><b>4. Develop services to support our residents' health and wellbeing, including those with mental health issues</b></p>	<p>We will work closely with our partners to ensure that the right support is available for our residents who need it across the town. This will include Watford's Healthy Hub which will strengthen the health support available for local people, including mental health help and guidance.</p>	<p>Healthy Hub</p>	<p>Covid has impacted on the implementation of the delivery of the Healthy Hub. In agreement with HCC a reviewed delivery plan has been put in place offering Covid secure Healthy Hub service:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Domestic Abuse and Mental Health worker to commence.</li> <li>✓ Remote offer, actively seeing clients and linking in with other services.</li> <li>✓ Develop website</li> <li>✓ June '21 – Explore opportunities for establishment of strong links with additional relevant organisations and partners with some of their services delivered through the Hub</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>October '21 – Recruitment for a designated Mental Health Officer underway to support a further focus in this area</li> <li>March '22 - Dependent on Covid restrictions, implement a secondary satellite Hub working in conjunction with the main Hub</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>The Healthy Hub launched remotely in May 2020. Services continue to be offered remotely and, where possible, in person in the community. Services have been extended working with partners such as Cathartic. Proposal to reopen hub from September onwards for face to face services, subject to covid restrictions.</p>
<p><b>4. Create a Dementia</b></p>	<p>Working with businesses, partners, carers and residents living with dementia we will champion Watford</p>	<p>Dementia Friendly Town</p>	<p>Lots achieved to date and milestones to be confirmed with delivery of agreed action plan to be reviewed in the light of Covid-19</p>	<p>On track</p>	<p>Watford has built a strong reputation as a dementia-friendly town and</p>

<p><b>Friendly Community</b></p>	<p>as a place where people living with dementia are understood, respected and supported.</p>		<p>and the focus of the council's Community Protection team on working with residents and businesses on preventing the spread of the virus.</p> <p>Action plan being refreshed in current steering group as we learn to live with covid.</p>		<p>accreditation has been achieved for a further two years. Support and activities for those living with dementia and their families have continued over the last period, including the Golden Memories reminiscence programme at Watford Football Club, Trishaw rides at Watford Cycle Hub and the Forget Me Not restaurant at West Herts College.</p>
<p><b>6. Commemorate Watford's response to Covid-19</b></p>	<p>Building on the community spirit and outstanding work across the town during the Covid-19 pandemic, we will evolve Watford Together so that it commemorates Watford's response to the pandemic, recognises the invaluable contribution of our front line workers and provides opportunities for reflection for all parts of our community.</p>	<p>Watford Together (Road to Renewal Plan)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have been unable to confirm a timeline for these events which are entirely subject to Government guidance and legislation. However, there is a clear commitment to celebrate the resilience of the town and great community spirit across the local area shown by Watford residents through the Covid-19 pandemic.</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>With government restrictions now ended, the council provided a Summer of Fun across the town, with the Big Screen at Knutsford Playfield and Woodside Playfield, the Big Beach and Maze on the Parade, Imagine Watford in Watford Fields, George V park and Garston Park and Big Band Stand in Cassiobury Park. Work to design a memorial for front line covid workers has also progressed with an artist selected, a site at the hospital chosen and some funding secured. In addition, a tree memorial will be planted close to the band stand in Cassiobury Park as part of the</p>

					Queen's Jubilee Green Canopy as a new place of reflection for residents.
<b>7. Enhance the town's character and its physical heritage</b>	We will produce a refreshed Conservation Area Management Plan which ensures that we continue to protect the character of our town and enhances its future for local people.	CAMP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Q1 2021/22 - Prepare tender and appoint consultants</li> <li>Q3 2021/22 – Seek cabinet approval</li> </ul>	Delivery Reprofiled	Delivery has been re-profiled to ensure alignment with the Local Plan work. Now expected to commence Q3 2021/22 with completion expected this year. A new part time apprentice post has been created to help resource this project.
<b>COMMITMENT</b> Enable our cultural and creative sectors to flourish		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<b>1. Maximise the cultural opportunities for the town</b>	We will refresh Watford's Cultural Strategy to ensure our cultural and creative sectors can flourish, help to bring our community together and provide a vibrant, diverse and exciting offer to residents and visitors.	Watford Together (Road to Renewal Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ August '20 – AEA commissioned to provide support in delivery of the council's existing cultural strategy, including our work with the cultural sector</li> <li>✓ October '20 – Review of all strategic partnerships underway. Final outcome to be informed by AEA review</li> <li>✓ November '20 – Cultural Leaders Group to review AEA report and action plan</li> <li>✓ January '21 – AEA final report to Cabinet alongside THQ Programme</li> <li>✓ January '21 – Governance workshop to establish preferred governance model</li> </ul>	On track	<p>Recommendations from the Strategy have now been consolidated into a single action plan, aligning with the council's Town Hall Quarter programme. The next steps will be to convene a further meeting of the CLG to agree the governance model we should adopt.</p> <p>Work is also underway with the Palace Theatre and the Pump House on their future plans and collaborating such that the council can support them as they seek funding for</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ June '21 – Strategy recommendations consolidated into single action plan for delivery</li> <li>• Nov '21 – Cultural Leaders Group to agree adoption of governance model</li> </ul>		the plans.
<b>2. Making the most of the town's cultural and entertainment venues</b>	We will ensure that council-owned entertainment venues continue to provide a high quality, varied and diverse entertainment programme for all in our town and further enhancing the buildings so that they are modern and sustainable.	Watford Colosseum Refurbishment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ August '20 – AEA Commissioned to provide support in delivery of the council's existing cultural strategy, including our work with the cultural sector</li> <li>✓ December '20 – Contract with HQ theatres ends</li> <li>✓ July '21 – RIBA Stage 1 designs reviewed by the Town Hall Quarter Member Steering Group</li> <li>✓ Sept '21 – Engagement with cultural organisations from across the town to understand space requirements</li> <li>• November '21 - RIBA Stage 2 designs and associated business case for the Colosseum refurbishment to be approved by Cabinet</li> <li>• Q2 2022 – Refurbishment works commence on site at the Colosseum</li> <li>• Q3 2023 – Refurbished Colosseum reopens</li> </ul>	On track	Cultural Strategy delivery support underway with Cultural Leaders engaged and ongoing alignment of the council's cultural ambitions across the town. Further work for this commitment will follow the successful completion of the Cultural Strategy work and additional scoping related to the Town Hall Quarter programme for which the business case is expected in November 2021. Work is also underway with the Palace Theatre and the Pump House on their infrastructure plans and collaborating so that we can make the best use of the space in our town for community groups
<b>3. Enhance our cultural partnerships</b>	We will work together with Watford's cultural partners and the South West Herts Growth Board on shared initiatives to build on the strength of the town's creativity, innovation and	Watford Together (Road to Renewal Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ August '20 – AEA commissioned to provide support in delivery of the council's existing cultural strategy, including our work with the cultural sector</li> </ul>	On track	It is anticipated that a shared governance model will be agreed by the end of this year with our Cultural Leaders Group. The council continues

	<p>entrepreneurial spirit and provide a strong cultural offering for the town and our residents which works to attract people to the town and supports businesses.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ October '20 – Review of all strategic partnerships underway. Final outcome to be informed by AEA review</li> <li>✓ November '20 – Cultural Leaders Group to review AEA report and action plan</li> <li>✓ January '21 – AEA final report to Cabinet alongside THQ Programme</li> <li>✓ January '21 – Governance workshop to establish preferred governance model</li> <li>✓ June '21 – Strategy recommendations consolidated into single action plan for delivery</li> <li>• Nov '21 – Cultural Leaders Group to agree adoption of governance model</li> </ul>		<p>to work closely with the Herts Growth Board, Hertfordshire LEP, County Council and neighbouring District / Borough Councils on a county-wide Covid-9 recovery plan which will look to align our economic ambitions with the cultural sector so that we can ensure that we have a strong cultural offering for the town. This is an addition to our Town Hall Quarter programme which has a focus on culture at its heart, creating a new cultural focus for the town and our residents, visitors and communities.</p>
<p><b>COMMITMENT</b> Ensure we have quality events, recreational opportunities and outdoor spaces for people to get together, feel part of the town and boost their health and wellbeing.</p>		<p><b>Project</b></p>	<p><b>Key Milestones</b></p>	<p><b>'RAG' Rating</b></p>	<p><b>Update</b></p>
<p><b>1. Complete Oxhey Activity Park</b></p>	<p>We will deliver Oxhey Activity Park, an exciting new venue for skateboarding, BMX and cycling, combined with a café and community facilities.</p>	<p>Oxhey Activity Park</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 7 September '20– Practical completion</li> <li>✓ 7 September '21 – Handed over to Veolia following conclusion of defect liability period</li> </ul>	<p><b>Complete</b></p>	<p>Oxhey Activity Park opened in September 2020. Car Park extension was opened in April 2021 following feedback from residents and visitors. The park has now been handed over to Veolia for ongoing maintenance.</p>

<p><b>2. Create Woodside Sports Village</b></p>	<p>In order to provide modern and attractive facilities for sports and leisure for all the community, and our young residents in particular, to enjoy, we will deliver a new vision for Woodside that makes best use of the space available to provide new sports and leisure facilities in the town.</p>	<p>Woodside</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ April '20 – Design Brief to procure consultants</li> <li>✓ Sept '20 - Appoint design team</li> <li>✓ October '21 - onwards detailed design, planning and procurement to begin on site in late 2021</li> </ul> <p>Further milestones subject to the design work underway.</p>	<p>On track</p>	<p>Detailed design work continues to create a new and exciting space for residents across the town. Additional opportunity to create a 'Learn to Ride' facility at King George V playing fields has also been identified and is being progressed.</p>
<p><b>3. Revitalise the River Colne</b></p>	<p>We will improve the River Colne through Watford to make it a more appealing place for local people to enjoy and a better environment for plants and wildlife to flourish.</p>	<p>Reclaiming the River Colne</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ April '20 - May '21 – River improvement plans developed, funding streams assessed</li> <li>• May '21 – March '22 – Environmental improvement procurements underway</li> <li>• October '21 – Calendar of events around the river commences</li> <li>• March '22 – Landscape and access improvements complete</li> <li>• March '22 – Water quality reports due</li> </ul> <p>Further milestones to be determined as programme progresses.</p>	<p>On track</p>	<p>Recruitment of a Project Manager to support delivery of this project has now been completed. Work can now begin on confirming timelines. However, project governance has been proceeding with the existing team, including the securing of additional funding and engagement with partners.</p>
<p><b>4. Improve our local parks</b></p>	<p>We will upgrade Watford's much loved parks and open spaces including Meriden Park, Lea Farm Recreation Ground, Cassiobury Park performance space and the town's outdoor playgrounds so that they provide opportunities for our residents to exercise and spend time together and enhance the biodiversity of the town.</p>	<p>Park Enhancements</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Subject to recruitment of Project Manager who started with the council at the end of September. Work is now underway to scope these projects at which point timelines will be confirmed.</li> </ul>	<p>Planning underway</p>	<p>Works continually ongoing and 12 green flags issued to Watford Parks in 2020. Applications for 17 green flag sites were submitted in mid-February with the results expected in September 2021. Further milestones on future parks improvements to be</p>

					identified through the planning process which can now commence as the Project Manager recruitment has been completed.
<b>5. Enhance our public spaces</b>	We will improve public spaces across the town to provide excellent, safe and attractive outdoor spaces that support a greener Watford. This work will include the enhancement of key areas of our town such as St Albans Road, Clarendon Road and the Watford Junction Gateway, as well as other local street and open space improvement initiatives.	<p>Clarendon Road</p> <p>Watford Junction</p> <p>St Albans Road</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Q1 2020 – Construction works ongoing from St Johns Road to Station Road</li> <li>✓ Q1 2020 - One way traffic flow Beechen Grove and St Johns Road for 9 months</li> <li>✓ Q3 2020 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Phase starts</li> <li>• 2022/23 – Completion of all works</li> <li>• 2023/2024 Defects Correction period</li> <li>• 2024/25 Handback the completed project to Highway Authority, Herts County Council</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Q2 2020 – Implementation of scheme</li> <li>✓ Q3 2020 – Completion of scheme</li> <li>• 2021-22 Defects Correction Period</li> <li>• 2023 Hand back the completed project to Network Rail</li> </ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Q2 2020 – HCC permits &amp; Technical agreement</li> <li>✓ Construction</li> <li>✓ Q3 2020 – Completion</li> <li>• Q3 2020 – Q3 2022 Defects Correction period (HCC required a 2 year period)</li> <li>• Q4 2022 – Sign off and handover of highway back to County</li> </ul>	<b>On track</b>	A number of public realm schemes are either complete or underway. Significant improvement works have already been undertaken in Clarendon Road with the third phase of these works commencing recently. Improvements to the Watford Junction forecourt and St Albans Road are now complete and have succeeded in improving the street scene and access for residents and visitors to the many businesses.

<b>COMMITMENT</b> Work even more closely with the voluntary and community sector, to build a resilient community where people support each other		<b>Project</b>	<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
<b>1. Support the voluntary sector in Watford to provide positive outcomes for those in need</b>	We will build upon the success of our Watford Helps initiative and harness the community spirit established during the COVID-19 crisis to work in partnership with charitable, community and voluntary organisations focused on helping our vulnerable residents live healthy, happy and independent lives.	Watford Helps (Road to Renewal Plan)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ August '20 – Voluntary Sector Specialist recruited</li> <li>✓ September '20 – Review approach approved by Informal Cabinet and engagement underway</li> <li>✓ October '20 – Internal review of draft strategy</li> <li>✓ November '20 – Strategy approved by Cabinet</li> <li>✓ May '21 - W3RT to provide a menu of options covering which set of recommendations they can implement within their current budget</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	On track	Following approval of our Voluntary Sector Strategy, work on how best to ensure that the positive joint working across the sector and with the council throughout Covid-19 is harnessed and taken forward in the long-term is currently being undertaken in joint cooperation with W3RT. A separate, more detailed report is produced by W3RT on a quarterly basis detailing the progress made against the recommendations in the Strategy but positive headway continues to be made.

<p><b>2. Ensure our community buildings benefit local residents</b></p>	<p>Through our Community Asset Review, we will make sure our community buildings are well maintained and we will work with our community tenants to make sure the buildings maximise the benefits for our local people.</p>	<p>Community Asset Review</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ October '20 - Completion of review of all buildings – Includes Condition Surveys and schedules of work</li> <li>✓ July '21 – Property Strategy to Cabinet for approval</li> <li>• January '22 – Works to start on Phase 1 assets</li> <li>• April '22 – Works to start on Phase 2 assets</li> <li>• July '22 – Works to start on Phase 3 assets</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>Project Manager in post to support the work required over the next two years.</p> <p>The project will be a key component of the delivery of the Property Strategy to ensure our community buildings are in a good state of repair, provide benefit to the local community and that the lease arrangements with tenants are appropriate and in accordance with the policies outlined within the new Property Strategy.</p>
<p><b>3. Ensure a safer Watford</b></p>	<p>We will work with partners and use our statutory powers to ensure that Watford is a safe place for all our residents.</p>	<p>One Watford</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 28 July – Review approach, working with the LGA to undertake remote peer support, agreed</li> <li>✓ 12 October – All One Watford members notified in relation to review</li> <li>✓ 1-3 December –Desktop exercise completed</li> </ul>	<p>On track</p>	<p>With the benefit of feedback from the LGA, work on defining the future terms of reference of One Watford will be undertaken as part of the town's brand positioning work.</p>
<p><b>COMMITMENT</b></p>		<p><b>Project</b></p>	<p><b>Key Milestones</b></p>	<p><b>'RAG' Rating</b></p>	<p><b>Update</b></p>

Work with partners to end rough sleeping and help people enjoy better lives					
<p><b>1. Achieve and maintain zero rough sleepers on the streets on Watford</b></p>	<p>We will agree a new Homelessness Strategy for Watford which will be reviewed on an annual basis and adapted regularly to ensure that it remains valid and supporting those in our community to achieve and maintain zero rough sleepers on the streets of Watford.</p>	<p>Homelessness and Rough Sleeping</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 30 June - Medium Complex Intensive Support Service (MCISS) opens</li> <li>✓ 6 July – Homelessness Strategy approved by Cabinet</li> <li>✓ 14 July - Information shared on training, secondment and shared learning opportunities provided at Watford Strategic Homeless Forum</li> <li>✓ 14 July - Watford Rough Sleeping Taskforce was launched</li> <li>✓ 23 September – Next Steps Accommodation funding bid successful</li> <li>✓ 25 September - MHCLG funding of £101,000 for winter shelter and accommodation for rough sleepers with no recourse to public funds obtained for the period October 2020-March 2021</li> <li>✓ 30 September - Application for 20 units of self-contained move-on accommodation submitted</li> <li>✓ Q3 2020 MHCLG Rough Sleepers Initiative funding application – submission May 2021 (MHCLG changed the timetable)</li> <li>✓ Q4 2020/21: NSAP short-term revenue funding spent by end March 2021</li> <li>✓ Q4 2020/21: NSAP capital funding spent by end March 2021</li> <li>✓ Q4 2020/21: Work with HCC re best use of housing related support funding by end March 2021</li> </ul>	<p><b>On track</b></p>	<p>It should be noted the Homelessness Strategy contains a significant number of initiatives, milestones and objectives – the list contained within this report is not exhaustive with more detailed reporting on delivery of Strategy provided to HPAG. However, this does provide an overview of the significant progress already made in this field over the last few months, where there has been a significant focus on supporting those who find themselves homeless and sleeping on the streets. This resulted in a period of 2 months between January and March 2021 when zero rough sleepers were recorded. Whilst numbers have risen very slightly they remain extremely low</p> <p>We have adopted and continue to develop a single pathway for rough sleepers, working with partners from across the town to help achieve this commitment to</p>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Q1 2021/22 - Open complex needs scheme</li> <li>✓ June 2021 - Launch multi-agency Single Homelessness Pathway</li> <li>✓ July 2021 – launch Outreach Plus at The Sanctuary</li> <li>• Q3 2021/22: Have zero rough sleepers on streets of Watford</li> </ul>		achieve and maintain zero rough sleeping. This Single Homelessness Pathway will take approx. 1 year to bed down.
<b>2. Support our residents with more complex needs and housing requirements</b>	We will develop a focused scheme to help those with more complex needs, looking at areas such as housing and other targeted support and working with partner organisations to ensure that these services are provided.	Complex Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ Q1 2020 – Source Support Service Provider</li> <li>✓ Q4 2020 – Sign Support Contract with provider</li> <li>✓ Q3 2020 – Implementation of works</li> <li>✓ Q4 2021 - Completion</li> </ul>	<b>Complete</b>	The Complex Needs scheme at Brindle Court opened on 1 April 2021 as planned, managed by council partners, One YMCA. It will provide much needed support for some of the most vulnerable in the town.
<b>3 Continue partnership working</b>	We will work with partners to ensure there are no rough sleepers on the streets of Watford.	Rough sleeping and homelessness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ 6 July – Homelessness Strategy approved by Cabinet</li> <li>✓ 14 July - Information shared on training, secondment and shared learning opportunities provided at Watford Strategic Homeless Forum</li> <li>✓ 14 July - Watford Rough Sleeping Taskforce was launched</li> <li>✓ June 2021 - Launch multi-agency Single Homelessness Pathway</li> <li>• September 2021 - work with agencies to house a number of Afghan refugees</li> <li>• Mar 2022 – Herts CC recommissioning process ends</li> </ul>	<b>On track</b>	<p>The Watford Rough Sleeping Taskforce is continuing to meet on a monthly basis focusing on hard-to-engage individuals and agreeing a multi-agency approach to focused and bespoke support, working with the council’s designated Rough Sleepers Coordinator.</p> <p>Monthly KPI meetings with partner agencies to ensure the Single Homelessness Pathway begins to work as planned.</p>



## Watford Borough Council Organisational Development Strategy Progress Update

### Theme 1 – Workforce Health and Wellbeing

#### Key Achievements over last 3 months

- The Watford Health and You programme has been shortlisted for an award from the (RSPH) Royal Society for Public Health.
- We have successfully bid for a government grant, Via Herts County Council, of £18,000, to help prevent Workplace Burnout.

#### Theme BRAG Analysis

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BRAG rating	Key	Total number in theme
Completed	Completed	8
On track	On track	2
Planning underway	Planning underway	0
Delayed / Unknown	Delayed / Unknown	0
	Delivery reprofiled as a result of external influences	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>13</b>

COMMITMENT		Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Focus on tackling stigma associated with mental health				
Take steps to improve the number of managers who feel confident to spot the early warning signs of mental health and have the skills to manage those conversations	All managers to be trained in how to spot signs of mental health issues with Remploy providing relevant training course which will consist of 2 x 2hr on-line face to face group training.	By 21 March 2021	Completed	7 dates were arranged in November / December 2020 with the majority of managers having attended specialist training by January 2021. Since then further

				sessions have been held and future sessions will be arranged subject to demand and sufficient numbers attending.
Mental health first aid training for colleagues, enabling them to spot the signs and offer support.	Mental Health First Aiders to be accessible.	By 1 March 2021	Completed but as new MHFAs appointed additional training will be given	On-line e-learning courses available to all staff together with an online consulting tool. Additional volunteers for MHFA have been identified, signed up and received training. Further support for staff is available through Remploy and the staff intranet updated with details.
Tackle stigma around mental health issues or declaring a disability by encouraging open conversations	Increase awareness of policies and use of on-line material to ensure staff have knowledge to recognise when help is required.	By 1 December 2020	Completed and Ongoing	We will liaise with Mental Health Champions and First Aiders to recognise the individual needs of employees who may be reluctant to share concerns. Regular and ongoing communication relating to mental health issued and planned. Intranet contains a wealth of information which is regularly updated. Additional funding received from government and our Mental Health Champions

				are in the process of reviewing different options.
<b>COMMITMENT</b> Support personal and professional growth in health subjects		<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Continue to grow and develop "Watford Health and You" resources.	Intranet pages to be updated with information on a regular basis.	1	Completed and Ongoing	The intranet information is reviewed on a monthly basis and updates added for staff.
Create and publicise a range of opportunities to learn and build good habits on health and wellbeing topics so our people can access e-learning and interactive, habit changing sessions. - Factors affecting wellbeing at work (control and autonomy) - Food, sleep and exercise - Financial health	Identify e-learning opportunities and ensure they are advertised and accessible via the i-Learn platform	By 1 September 2021	Completed and Ongoing	New resources are constantly being identified and added to our library accessible through the intranet. Communications sent out to staff regarding the new material available.
Use focus groups to develop a health and wellbeing programme – with access to a number of health and improvement areas.	Design and Launch a programme with feedback from group Ensure there is resilience and a feeling of wellbeing amongst staff, as measured by Wellbeing Survey Increased staff satisfaction and motivation as measured by staff survey	By 1 Sept 2021 and Ongoing	On track	Mental Health First Aiders and Champions group established and meeting on a monthly basis to discuss wellbeing issues and help identify trends which are then reviewed by the Leadership Board. The group continue to meet regularly and provide feedback on initiatives. Grant received via Government to spend on preventing burnout activities. Additional

				activities to be discussed at next meeting.
<b>COMMITMENT</b> Ensure our occupational health and employee assistance offering is high quality and accessible to all		<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Continued promotion of the benefits of the Employee Assistance Programme and Occupational Health services.	Regular ongoing communication to take place to ensure all staff are aware of external support that is available.	By 1 April 2023	Completed and Ongoing	Intranet resources are regularly updated and communication for staff pointing to these resources.
<b>COMMITMENT</b> Craft great roles where our people feel in control over the best way to deliver their work and feel well supported to do so		<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Ensure that all of our people have access to "job crafting" training, so that they can develop skills to enhance flow, productivity, engagement and wellbeing.	Develop a process whereby employees have an opportunity to review the effectiveness of their role so that they can learn how to identify improvements and any new skills required	By 1 July 2021 <b>(To be reprofiled to March 2022 to align with Values and Behaviours sub-section)</b>	Delivery Reprofiled	Work to be fully scoped so that it also links in with Values and Behaviours project which is due to commence in October 2021, with completion scheduled for April 2022.
Ensure our leadership programmes emphasise the importance of engaging and co-designing work so all of our people feel able to contribute new ideas and instigate new and better ways of doing things	Key competencies to be identified and incorporated into updated Leadership Programme	By 1 October 2021 <b>(To be reprofiled to March 2022 to align with the above)</b>	Delivery Reprofiled	Input required from Values and Behaviours project to ensure a joined up approach. The programme content has now been approved with the tender process due to commence in October with delivery of first

				workshop scheduled for the beginning of 2022
Support teams to regularly pause and reflect on their work. Discussions should be around how to optimise team effectiveness and create a psychologically safe workspace	Develop a pro-forma to be used in team discussion to identify team successes and process improvement opportunities. 8/1/21 Ambassador Group to review in first instance	By 1 July 2021 <b>(To be reprofiled to March 2022 to align with the above)</b>	Delivery reprofiled	Focus groups using managers and staff ambassadors to be created to input into the pro forma and contribute other ideas and suggestions for the delivery of this objective. The delivery has been reviewed to align with the Values and Behaviours work which will commence in October 2021.
<b>COMMITMENT</b> Champion physical health		<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Adopt Public Health England workplace health standards and refresh our HR policies.	Review policies and procedures to ensure they are compliant with standards Ensure managers are confident in the support they can give their teams Benchmark our standards against other organisations	By 1 April 2022 and on going	On track	Policies regularly reviewed and interim policies, to reflect the covid-19 situation are introduced, for example interim Smarter Working policy. Policies will also be compared to PHE standards to identify gaps and improvements required.
Evaluation of pilot health check programme (environmental health)	Gain feedback from provider on common issues that need to be addressed	Now by 1 July 2021 (previous date By 1 April 2021)	Completed	Pilot took place in June 2020 with approx. 50% take up by staff. The benefits have now been reviewed and decision

				taken not to go ahead with this initiative.
Rollout of health check programme across the wider council	Collate and analyse anonymised data from system to identify any trends.	By 1 April 2021	Completed	'Wellbeing with CARI' rolled out to all staff in July 2020. Links to assessment have been added to all Mental Health and Wellbeing newsletters. A review of Cari was carried out in March 2021 which indicated that only 20% of staff completed questionnaire so data supplied insufficient for analysis. Decision taken not to progress with this initiative.

## **Theme 2 – An Organisation Driven by Values and Behaviours**

This part of the plan was put on hold whilst there were ongoing discussions regarding the imminent implementation of Local Government Reform to Hertfordshire last year. Values and Behaviours work due to commence in October 2021 with a completion date of April 2022.

This work will be linked to the Leadership Team development work and the overall Council Plan and associated deliverables to ensure that it supports the successful delivery of our commitments. The Staff Ambassadors Group, Management Group and other staff representatives will feed into the work.

Milestones and detailed progress update will be available as part of the next quarterly report to Cabinet.

### Theme 3 – Become an Agile Organisation

#### Key Achievements over last 3 months

Note - This theme is interlinked with the Reimagining Watford project which is underway. Once the key outputs from that project are known they may also link in with the actions required within this theme.

- Pathfinder group now set up who will work with teams to agree Agile Charter for each team. Initial training for Pathfinders to be arranged for September 2021
- The office environment is being re-designed and it is anticipated that employees will be returning to this in late Spring 2022.

#### Theme BRAG Analysis

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BRAG rating	Key	Total number in theme
	Completed	1
	On track	7
	Planning underway	1
	Delayed / Unknown	0
	Delivery reprofiled as a result of external influences	8
<b>Total</b>		<b>17</b>

COMMITMENT		Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
Optimise choice over when and where our people work				
Team based review of processes, learning and ways of working pre-, during and post-crisis.	Each team agrees how they will work going forward, with a formal date for reflection and review.	By 31 July 2020 <b>Reprofiled to Nov 2021 subject to government guidance</b>	Delivery reprofiled	The Covid-19 pandemic resulted in the majority of staff working remotely rather than be office based. However, planning is now underway for a return to the office, in a different way of working and this objective will link closely to the

				work underway regarding agile working.
Deliberate decisions and actions are taken to retain and embed ways of working that support agility	Each team participates in a simple team reflection session. A focus on what to stop, drop, continue, and re-invigorate, post COVID-19	By 1 October 2020 <b>Reprofiled for completion by 31 Dec 2021</b>	Delivery reprofiled	Flexible working is in place with staff working at home to suit their own personal situations. Managers are checking in with staff and ensuring key activities continue. Agile working plans are well underway and this objective will have close links to that project and Reimagining Watford.
Teams and the wider organisation agree what agile working is, and could be, so there is clarity (for example, in future, will 100% homeworking be acceptable for some roles?)	Clarity as to what agile working is, and recognition that “one size does not fit all” in each service – tested through the staff survey. “Challenge sessions” in LB where leaders can challenge each other, with a view to optimising an agile mind-set (at least every quarter).	By 1 December 2020 <b>Reprofiled for completion by Nov 2021</b>	Delivery reprofiled	Project underway to identify how we will define an Agile environment and the activities required to get there. Agile charters being worked on and plans for further input with teams to commence in October 2021.
Creation of agile champions. Teams, leaders and staff who can share their experiences (this becomes a recognised badge of honour).	Publication of case studies (at least every quarter). Reward and recognition of best practice.	By 31 January 2021 <b>Reprofiled for completion by Nov 2021</b>	Delivery reprofiled	Delivery dates to be reviewed as project start-up has been delayed due to Covid. However, our Agile Pathfinders are now in place and facilitation training is scheduled for September 2021.
Development of organisational case studies in agility to demonstrate the art of the possible in different types of teams.	Agile can be developed in different ways across different teams, the measurement is in team members feeling that they have some control and autonomy of when, where and how they work, in the context of their department, as measured the staff survey	By 31 January 2021 <b>Reprofiled for completion by 31 January 2022</b>	Delivery reprofiled	Delivery dates to be reviewed as project start-up has been delayed due to Covid. However, we are in the process of reviewing case studies from other organisations to help inform our hybrid working approach.

COMMITMENT Design ways of working that challenge and further develop an agile mind-set		Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
People policies (particularly health and safety and flexible working) are reviewed to optimise agile working	Policies reviewed, signed off and publicised. Flexibility and responsiveness that was demonstrated during crisis is replicated and embedded post-crisis and reflected in our policies.	By 31 March 2021	Completed	Interim Smarter Working (Agile) policy introduced. Other policies have already been reviewed updated and published. Remaining policies that need to be reviewed have been identified and an action plan for review in place.
Align our annual review (appraisal) process with our succession planning and staff development approach	Incorporate our staff's interests in deepening their understanding of other parts of the council and from this: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop a register of interests of individuals who wish to gain exposure or experience in another area</li> <li>• Be considered for a secondment or temporary promotion opportunity</li> </ul>	By 31 March 2021 <b>Full reporting to be in place by 1 Oct 2021</b>	On track	Line managers to discuss and record as part of their regular catch up sessions. HR to build a database of individuals' interest and to contact relevant managers with opportunities required and available i-Perform is now live and usage is increasing. Section 6 of this is devoted to Career Aspirations and reports taken from the system will give a snapshot of interest. The annual appraisal cycle is still underway but the first reports are expected in October 2021.
Re-design and delivery of project teams, where staff are chosen because of their functional role or experience. Instead, there will be a deliberate move to encourage people to work on projects because of their interest and potential.	Establish a direct link to a new Leadership Development programme. This will result in a record take-up of project roles in different areas of the business.	By 31 March 2021 Full implementation reprofiled to <b>March 2022</b>	Delivery reprofiled	i-perform launched 1 October as new check-in (1:1 meetings) and annual review platform. This will incorporate development discussions and a section for recording skills to kick start the central database of staff skills and

				abilities. Agile charters to be started in Sept 2021 followed by Values and Behaviours. This will link to new data from PDR system so it is expected to be complete and in place by April 2022
Creation of opportunities to pilot new approaches to agile working service models and solutions, with clear evaluation criteria	There will be a swift response to new demand. We will initially test on small scale, engaging users, gathering insight and learning what will work on a larger scale e.g. possible focus on digital solutions	By 31 March 2021 Full implementation reprofiled to <b>Q3 2021</b>	Delivery Reprofiled	Bi-monthly Team reflection exercises to identify and test opportunities to change processes that increase productivity. The delivery dates for this work have been reviewed to align with the Reimagining Watford project.
<b>COMMITMENT</b> Supporting the development of digital		<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Support colleagues to improve their digital skills using a blend of face to face and online channels	Assessment of our workforce digital learning requirements as we roll out digital solutions for our communities.	By 1 August 2021	On track	Develop a programme of courses that will increase awareness and use of digital technologies Digital training has been and is available for all staff. Further developments in the training to be reviewed following completion of annual appraisals and identification of training needs.
Creation of a digital mentor programme which buddies up "technophobes with techno geeks" promoting digital and potentially intergenerational learning	Number of successful buddying relationships established.	By 30 September 2021	On track	Through i-Perform process identify experts in their field and encourage them to become mentors for those developing in their roles.

<p>Creation of “digital champions” clustered around our most popular digital hard and software (such as 8x8). Champions will be available to share their knowledge and learning, informally with colleagues across the Council.</p>	<p>Digital champions established and regularly publicised and supported to help and coach others.</p>	<p>By 31 March 2021 but reprofiled to <b>31 December 2021</b></p>	<p>Planning underway</p>	<p>Identify champions in their specialist areas and publicise their availability to help those in need of increasing their knowledge and confidence. Each area has an IT Champion (not Digital Champion). A review is taking place to clarify roles.</p>
<p><b>COMMITMENT</b> Break down silos across teams</p>		<p><b>Key Milestones</b></p>	<p><b>‘RAG’ Rating</b></p>	<p><b>Update</b></p>
<p>Creation of an annual service roadshow – an opportunity for our staff to show case to each other the work they are doing, and learn more about different parts of the Council</p>	<p>Roadshow takes place, is vibrant, well attended and evaluates well</p>	<p>By 31 December 2021 But reprofiled to <b>31 March 2022</b></p>	<p>Delivery reprofiled</p>	<p>The Roadshow concept (which is usually face to face) needs to be reviewed to take into account the current restrictions placed upon us by the Covid19 pandemic. This will be reviewed when we return to an office environment</p>
<p>Review and re-design of corporate and local induction to reduce silo working and set expectations from the outset, to include:</p>	<p>Time spent in the CSC, as the face of the Council will be mandatory for all new starters. Each new starter will spend a minimum of two days working directly with at least two teams that their new role will require them to interface with, in the first 12 weeks of their employment.</p>	<p>By 31 March 2022</p>	<p>On track</p>	<p>Agreement in principle from CSC to host new starters but Covid-19 rules resulting in home working may restrict some activities.</p>
<p>A commitment that all staff, irrespective of their role or level in the organisation, can spend up to five days per year, working in, or shadowing in another department, to improve their understanding and make important links.</p>	<p>Take up of developmental opportunity to work in another department or team. An opportunity to blog and share their learning and experience, to encourage take up.</p>	<p>31 March 2022</p>	<p>On track</p>	<p>Pro-forma to be designed and distributed to all department managers to identify work shadowing opportunities in their direct area. Details of all opportunities to be shared on intranet so that managers can</p>

				arrange. Covid restrictions have stopped office working so this will be put on hold until the new year.
Creation of “partnership timeouts” where different parts of the council who are internal customers to each other, can come together, review ways of working and reflect on how the customer transfers seamlessly between teams.	Creation of tool which can be used by teams who often interface to identify process improvements. Participants will gain a greater understanding of the work of different teams and departments and have greater insight and awareness of the impact of their work on other teams.	31 March 2022	On track	Tool to be developed at start of new year to reflect the working arrangements in force at the time. This will be linked to the Values and Behaviours to ensure everyone has a mindset to look at continuous evolution of the customer journey.
In recognition that silos take place in hierarchy, as well as across teams, take steps to empower front line teams and individuals to take action and make changes to practices, for the benefit of their customers.	Creation and delivery of OD tools to support leaders to encourage the whole team, irrespective of role or grade to lead innovation and service change (measured by the staff survey?). Staff should contribute ideas and suggestions for change and take decisions for the benefit of their customers.	31 March 2022	On track	Tool to be developed at start of new year to reflect the working arrangements in force at the time. Draft of leadership programme approved and going out to tender. This is linked to work on Agile Charters and will be embedded in team meetings and management programmes.

## Theme 4 – Performance and Staff Development

### Key Achievements over last 3 months

- Roll out of i-Perform completed and being used for all Annual Reviews.
- Delays in the completion of reviews by managers has limited the data available but recent chase up mean that more data will be available at the end of August.
- Proposed content of Management and Leadership Development programme agreed by senior team.

### Theme BRAG Analysis

BRAG rating	Key	Total number in theme
	Completed	0
	On track	11
	Planning underway	1
	Delayed / Unknown	0
	Delivery re-profiled as a result of external influences	2
<b>Total</b>		<b>14</b>

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COMMITMENT		Key Milestones	'RAG' Rating	Update
We will create a strong development process				
Design and implementation of development programmes linked to succession planning and building organisational resilience	Proactive management of individuals to ensure stretch, personal development and improve likelihood of retention Identification of business critical roles, vacancy risk and pipeline prospects for short, medium and long-term Staff Ambassador group and management forums to discuss, benchmark and review current data	<b>Target date re-profiled to 31 March 2022</b>	Delivery re-profiled	The new Leadership programme will also have links to the values and behaviours expected. As this is still in progress (see Theme 2) there will be a slight knock on effect with some sections of the programme. Recruitment of Executive/Group Head Assistant (GHA) has completed with two people taking up their roles in Nov 2020 and the

				remaining two at the start of the 2021 financial year. Draft of new leadership programme approved and going out to tender. This is also linked to work on Agile Charters. New target date for launch of programme by March 2022
Revise and refresh our development offering for all staff to facilitate good quality performance management, set clear objectives linked with our Council Plan and reflect how our organisational values are being demonstrated. Need to focus on the WHAT and HOW part of the role	Roll out of refreshed development approach  100% of staff and managers have completed their annual reviews with clear objectives set and a personal development plan in place	1 October 2021	On track	New i-Perform system launched in April 2021 and will support the identification of development areas for staff and support the introduction of clear objectives, regularly reviewed within the i-perform platform. The HOW part will also link with the development of new values and behaviours – how we expect staff to behave.
Support the recruitment and retention of apprentices to the council.	Increase the number of council apprentices.	1 October 2021	On track	There is agreement to recruit 6 apprentices across the council and this is on-going; however the current restrictions on office working due to Covid will need to be considered when reviewing the management and supervision of new apprentices. Whilst the pandemic has delayed the launch of new positions, we still intend to offer apprenticeships to school/college leavers. Applications for Kickstart positions have not been as successful as intended; however we have been able to recruit 2 Kick Start apprentices and continue to seek more.

Make full use of the apprenticeship levy to support learning and development and career progression.	All funds used. Demonstrable impact of learning for the individual and the organisation.	Review by 1 April 2021	On track	Subject to the above we are on-target to make full use of the Levy
Develop a comprehensive approach to succession planning which incorporates planning for roles which are: Hard to Fill Business Critical (i.e. a potential single point of failure) Have an ageing workforce profile	Identification of all “single points of failure” roles will be a starting point to prioritise development needs. HR to create a central list so that risks can be identified.	By 1 April 2021. Work has commenced and completion has been reprofiled to <b>1 October 2021</b>	On track	Pro-forma developed that will enable HR Business Partners to collect information from relevant line managers. This initiative has re-started and data is being collected by HR.
HRBP's to hold information of who can step into each role at short notice.	Ensure there are no “Single Points of Failure” within the workforce.	As above	On Track	Work has commenced on this area and areas where staff will be required to be redeployed is underway. Data still being collected and issues being identified. A report will be issued in September 2021.
We will work with partners to explore opportunities to create a comprehensive graduate and / or degree placement programmes, designed to attract and retain high calibre graduates	Successful programme in place with strong feedback from graduates.	By 1 September 2022	On track	Sign up process for new National Graduate Development Programme to commence by end of 2021 calendar year.
<b>COMMITMENT</b> Prioritise the development of all of our people		<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>‘RAG’ Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Build in the concept of “everyone is a leader at Watford” into our recruitment and on-boarding programmes, as well as our work with colleagues at all levels of the organisation	Currently, 32% of staff survey respondents feel that they cannot contribute to ideas for improvement / ways to do things differently (and another 3% didn't know). Success to be measured by a statistically significant improvement in staff survey results.	By 1 August 2022	On track	When launched the new Leadership programme will contain a module on Continuous Process Improvement to highlight that everyone can contribute to improvements. (See commitment above to develop a strong development

	Support in first line leadership, middle leadership and senior leadership programmes, emphasising the benefits and risks of leadership styles that lead to constant improvement.			process). Induction programme being updated to include session on looking into process and service improvements. Content of new Management / Leadership programmes agreed and new supplier being sought. Induction programme to be updated for next cohort. Also undertaking a review of Mandatory e-learning requirements
Review training and promotion data by workforce profile, so that we can assure ourselves that under-represented groups are both accessing the development required and successfully achieving promotions, in our organisation.	Assurance that under-represented groups access the same level of development and achieve promotion at the same rate as all staff.	By 1 August 2022	On track	Additional request sent to all staff for them to add personal characteristic information to their profile. HR system also being configured with current and historical development information and this will enable analysis of workforce strengths.
Launch and integrate our new performance review system, i-Perform for regular 1:1 check –ins and annual reviews (appraisal) so that all staff feel it’s a worthwhile exercise: - Incorporation of interests and passion, as well as career development discussions. - Use the annual review as an opportunity to nurture all talent, irrespective of grade or role - Carefully link the role back to the objectives of the organisation so that everyone understands how they make a difference	Currently, 18% of our staff feel that the annual review is not of value to them (and a further 8% did not know!). We want our people to look forward and see the value of an annual review. The success will be an improved rating of the quality of the conversation (measured by the staff survey).	By 1 October 2021	On track	New i-Perform system launched 1 October 2020 and is available to all staff. Regular reviews will take place to determine its effectiveness. Information on interests will be collected to link in with the development of agile mind-sets (see 2nd commitment in theme 3). The new i-Perform process specifically links personal objectives to that of the organisation. We will be reviewing outputs every quarter to ensure the collected information is relevant. New i-Trent HR system also being configured with current and historical

				development information and this will enable analysis of workforce strengths.
<b>COMMITMENT</b> We will encourage and actively develop our aspiring leaders		<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Our new 'Watford Leads' development programme will build management skills and confidence amongst all team managers and leaders (3rd tier managers).	All 3rd tier managers will complete the course over time. Participants will deliver a specific business improvement project in the workplace. All events to have a cross section of departments represented. Positive feedback from participants. Colleagues feel supported by their manager – measured by the staff survey (baseline to be set following next survey)	By 1 December 2021	On track	While the planning of a programme is underway and ideas for holding remotely are considered, the impact of Covid must be taken into account. Content of new Management / Leadership programmes agreed and new supplier being sought.
Introduce a 'first steps to leadership' programme to cover the main principles of leadership and Watford's Council policies and processes.	Course designed. Selection and evaluation approach agreed. Aspiring leaders feel supported to develop their career – measured by course evaluation (baseline to be set). Positive feedback from participants. Improved compliance with corporate policies.	By 1 April 2021 with full implementation reprofiled for completion by <b>1 October 2021</b>	On track	Leadership development has taken place, mainly remotely, with follow up sessions planned. The programme will have close links with output from Theme 2 - Values and Behaviours project. Content of new Management / Leadership programme outline agreed and new supplier being sought. Intention is to launch the programme in Q4 2021/22
<b>COMMITMENT</b> We will create an enviable programme of leadership development		<b>Key Milestones</b>	<b>'RAG' Rating</b>	<b>Update</b>
Pilot and roll -out a new leadership competency framework, that is	Managers use feedback to create their personal development plan – measured through performance review scores.	By 1 April 2021 but reprofiled to <b>April 2022</b>	Delivery Reprofiled	Pilot complete and roll-out commenced. Re-profiled to April 2022 that will link in

linked to the annual review process	Managers visibly demonstrate the qualities set out in the Framework, measured via regular 1; 1 check-in meetings and annual review process. Increased opportunities for secondments and career progression for aspiring leaders – measured by staff survey (baseline to be set)			with new Leadership Development Programme Launch
Support leaders to link workforce and succession planning – forecasting the type and number of roles and skills needed for the future and create learning and development plans to support their team development.	All leaders received appropriate training tools and support to complete their workforce plans. All services have a workforce plan in place, aligned to the annual business planning cycle.	1 October 2021	On track	Review workforce plan with leaders to ensure appropriate individual development plans are in place to satisfy future needs. Re-profiled to 1 October 2021 that will link to Theme 2 Outputs. Linked to critical worker exercise (single point of risk). Data still being collected and report expected in September 2021

Part A

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date of meeting:** Monday, 4 October 2020

**Report author:** Head of Enterprise Programme Management Office

**Title:** Covid-19 – Our Road to Renewal

## 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 Covid-19 and the subsequent lockdown has had a significant impact across the town and council. Watford Borough Council were one of the first in the country to launch a Renewal Plan as part of our new Strategic Framework in July of last year. The plan set out how we could support our community, businesses and our own staff as the first wave of the pandemic subsided. The plan has provided a clear focus for the council and allowed the realignment of resources as the focus changed from the initial incident response to helping our community, businesses and staff to recover.
- 1.2 Much has been achieved since last July when the Road to Renewal Plan was first published. Unprecedented support has been provided to businesses across the town with a significant number of grants issued, business engagement enhanced and a number of specific support initiatives progressed, including the Wenta business recovery scheme, the launch of WhatsApp for business and the development of our key accounts scheme. Similarly, we have continued to provide support to some of the most vulnerable in our community, have successfully bid for a number of central funds to contribute towards our target of achieving zero rough sleepers and raised nearly £180,000 for local voluntary organisations. The council made a conscious decision to focus on 'renewal', rather than 'recovery', using the council response to Covid-19 as a springboard to fundamentally change how we work with our local businesses, engage with our community and how we deliver our services internally.
- 1.3 Progress on the Road to Renewal plan has been reported to Cabinet on a quarterly basis with the most recent report having been noted by Cabinet on 7 June 2021. Overview and Scrutiny Committee has also had the opportunity to review the progress reports. Internally, a weekly Renewal Coordination Board, chaired by the Managing Director, has overseen delivery.
- 1.4 However, the delivery of the plan has not been without challenge. Whilst our planning ensured that we were prepared for a second wave of the virus and were able to maintain services throughout the subsequent lockdowns, there has been a need for the plan to remain agile, adapting in line with the circumstances and

government guidelines as they responded to the changing nature of the pandemic. As a result, some activities, particularly in relation to reopening and activities post-lockdown, have needed to be undertaken on multiple occasions. Similarly, other activities, such as events bringing the community together, have not been possible in light of ongoing government guidance.

- 1.5 Whilst the government has announced plans to manage Covid-19 over the Autumn and Winter months, the vaccine roll out is progressing well and so it is a good opportunity to review our Road to Renewal plan to ensure that it continues to best meet the needs of our local community. At the time our existing plan was developed, we did not know how long the restrictions would be in force for and could not have foreseen additional lockdowns in November and at the beginning of this year, considerably impacting our community, businesses and staff. Nevertheless, robust service and business continuity planning as part of our original Road to Renewal plan meant that the organisation was prepared for these eventualities and was subsequently able to respond appropriately with minimal impact on the delivery of our front line services.
- 1.6 Furthermore, the council has continued to work closely with the County Council, our neighbouring authorities and partners to ensure that we achieve a holistic recovery and can benefit from strategic alignment across Hertfordshire. The council's Managing Director has remained the chair of the county-wide Recovery Coordinating Group, made up of representatives from Hertfordshire County Council, Hertfordshire District and Borough Councils, the police, the NHS, Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership and Hertfordshire Growth Board, ensuring that the council continues to play a key role within the county. There remains a strong appetite amongst partners to continue working collaboratively to maximise the impact of recovery and there has been agreement to enter into a statement of intent to that effect. Refreshing our own Road to Renewal plan at this time provides an opportunity to ensure that our plans align to the strategic recovery across the County, even as we continue to input and influence those plans.
- 1.7 Our refreshed Road to Renewal plan, shown as Appendix 1 to this report , details the specific activity to be undertaken by the council in order to lead the renewal work over the next 12 months. As well as alignment with the Council Plan, it builds upon both the positives, such as the overwhelming community-spirited reaction to the crisis, and the lessons learnt from the council's initial response.
- 1.8 It should be noted that recovery from Covid-19 is expected to take much longer than just 12 months but, given the announcement from Central Government on the plans for managing the virus over the Autumn and Winter of 2021/22, the future impact of the pandemic remains uncertain and so an opportunity to pause and review the plan and our ongoing response to support residents and businesses during 2022 will be beneficial. This will also then align with the publication of our new Corporate Delivery Plan, replacing the existing Delivery Plan which runs until

2022. Given the far-reaching impact of Covid-19, it is anticipated that this will provide an opportunity to review the council's strategic direction through the lens of renewal and ensure that renewal becomes embedded in our business as usual activity. A review in 12 months time will provide us with the opportunity to assess this position.

## 2.0 Risks

### 2.1

Nature of risk	Consequence	Suggested Control Measures	Response (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	Risk Rating (combination of severity and likelihood)
Our Road to Renewal Plan does not align with the Council Plan and wider council ambitions	Council priorities are unclear or conflicting leading to an ineffective response by the council in relation to renewal	Council Plan, Delivery Plan and Road to Renewal Plan were developed in conjunction with one another and form a comprehensive package of activities designed to support the post-Covid renewal across the town and within the council whilst aligning to the longer term strategic direction of the organisation. Clear objectives have been identified within the refreshed Road to Renewal Plan which support the delivery of Council Plan themes and commitments and the proposed 12-month time period for the refreshed plan will allow this to align with the development of the new Delivery Plan in 2022.	Treat	4
Our Road to Renewal Plan is not adopted by the council	No clear direction for the council to support renewal in the town and the agility needed to ensure that the plan continues to serve the needs of the community	The Road to Renewal Plan is refreshed and approved by Cabinet, allowing the council's focus to best reflect the current reality and impact of the pandemic.	Treat	4
Our Road to Renewal Plan is adopted but cannot be delivered	Town and council do not deliver the renewal as effectively as they could. Perceived lack of leadership and support	An appraisal of resourcing requirements has been undertaken in relation to the activities identified within the Road to Renewal Plan. This has included specific project management resource to drive forward and deliver the plan. This has been aligned to the corporate budget position prior to approval. A robust governance and reporting structure has also been established to ensure ongoing momentum and appropriate levels of scrutiny	Treat	8
Our Road to Renewal Plan does not allow for an agile response	Council's support for renewal is not as effective as it could be	It is acknowledged that the Road to Renewal Plan details key activities for the delivery of the objectives but there may be need to accelerate, amend or stop these plans in light of the fast changing external	Treat	8

to the changing external environment		environment. The governance structure in place allows for a formal change control process so that decisions to deviate from the Road to Renewal Plan are not made in isolation and with full overview of the Renewal Co-ordination Board. The approval of an updated plan provides an opportunity to pause and reset the plan so that it best serves the needs of the community given the current reality.		
The council's own ambitions in relation to renewal do not align with county-wide plans	Renewal is not as effective as it could be and opportunities to align renewal at a strategic level are not utilised	Statement of Intent in relation to ongoing collaborative working across Hertfordshire has been agreed, along with key areas of cooperation. The council will continue to play a key role in inputting and influencing the county-wide approach, working closely with our partners at county and district level, as well as the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Hertfordshire Growth Board, Hertfordshire Constabulary, the NHS and our active voluntary sector,	Treat	6

### 3.0 Recommendations

#### 3.1 It is recommended that:

- The Road to Renewal Plan work stream objectives outlined in this report are approved by Cabinet
- The Road to Renewal delivery actions (Appendix 1) are approved by Cabinet
- Progress on delivering the Road to Renewal delivery actions will continue to be reported on a quarterly basis to Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny Committee
- With agreement from the Elected Mayor and oversight from the Renewal Coordination Board, the Managing Director is able to make amendments to the plan objectives, governance structure and delivery actions
- Delegated authority is provided to the Managing Director, as chair of the Renewal Coordination Board, to draw down up to £5,000 of funding from the Renewal budget for minor items without the need for additional review by Portfolio Holders.

Cabinet should also note that the actions outlined in this report will continue to contribute to the delivery of the Council Plan 2020-2024.

#### **Further information:**

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**Report approved by: Donna Nolan, Managing Director**

### 4.0 Context – Renewal

The renewal phase is an integral phase of the Watford's response to Covid-19 and can be defined as:

*“The process of rebuilding, restoring and rehabilitating the community following an emergency”*

#### 4.1 To be successful, our renewal process will have certain key focus points and features:

- Co-ordination – it should act in line with an agreed aim and objectives, and be managed in line with accepted governance, co-ordination and decision making processes. This includes at a local, regional and national level.

- Focus points – renewal should support the restoration of emotional, social, economic and physical wellbeing. A key point, which is pertinent in these circumstances particularly, is that the process of restoration may reflect a ‘new normality’ as for many, life may never be the same again.

4.2 In respect of the current pandemic, the County Council established a Hertfordshire wide Recovery Coordinating Group last year. The Managing Director represents the council on this group and has a lead role. The Hertfordshire Recovery Coordination Group is continuing to lead on Covid-19 activity at a County-Level and all Districts are feeding into a Herts-wide plan where benefit can be achieved through collaborative and cross-county working.

4.3 To support this work, the county council, as well as all districts, and key partners such as the Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), the NHS, Hertfordshire Constabulary and Hertfordshire Growth Board, have agreed to enter into a shared statement of intent, emphasising a determination to continue working collaboratively in the interests of residents, businesses and communities across Hertfordshire. As such, the council’s own Road to Renewal plan closely reflects the identified thematic areas proposed at a county-wide level; community, economy, health and wellbeing and public sector service delivery.

4.4 This work does not detract from the activities outlined in our Road to Renewal plan, but rather complement and support them. As such, it is important that the council retains a suitable framework enabling it to link in to county-wide structures, whilst leading a co-ordinated effort in respect of the local community. Whilst local renewal efforts should be tied in with the county-wide work, it is important that these are nuanced to suit the needs of individual localities.

4.5 In July of last year the council therefore established its own Renewal Co-ordination Board, chaired by the Managing Director and attended by the Shared Director of Finance, Group Heads of Transformation, Place Shaping and Community and Environmental Services, the Executive Head of Strategy and Communications and the Head of the Enterprise Programme Management Office. This group has been responsible for leading the renewal work streams and ensuring the ongoing management of dependencies, risks and issues. The Managing Director has reported to the Elected Mayor on a regular basis and, as part of the Strategic Framework Quarterly Progress Report to Cabinet, an update on progress of relevant renewal activity has been provided throughout the last 12 months and this will continue.

## **5.0 Background and Focus**

5.1 There is little doubt that Covid-19 has had a significant impact across the country. This applies not only to the ongoing response to the pandemic which remains subject to Central Government announcements, but also in relation to the future

and the inevitable renewal required. There should also be little doubt that Covid-19 renewal will require significant focus over the coming years; the impact of the pandemic is not going to be something that can be resolved in a matter of months.

5.2 Whilst the economic impact of Covid-19 is clearly significant, the Road to Renewal Plan is not restricted to a focus solely on economic renewal. To ensure that appropriate focus and resource is committed to supporting a holistic renewal of the town and council, three work streams have been established which closely align to those proposed at a county-wide level:

- Community
- Business and Economy
- Organisational Renewal

These work streams are also consistent with the themes of the Council Plan to create a 'thriving, creative and diverse town', a 'healthy and happy town' and a council that 'serves our residents'. However, the plan should not be read in isolation. It is also closely aligned to the council's Organisational Development Strategy which recognises the significant effort and input from staff in delivering the council's response to the pandemic and the need for their support as we progress our plans for renewal. Following an enhanced focus on our strategic direction, our Road to Renewal plan similarly supports the delivery of a number of corporate strategies including our Cultural Strategy and Voluntary Sector Strategy. It will also support the development of our Sustainable Transport Strategy, Town Centre Framework, our Place Based Narrative and key programmes, such as the Town Hall Quarter. Specifically, the 'Business and Economy' work stream will also link in directly with the recently approved Economic Growth Strategy, representing the on-the-ground delivery of our support for businesses and the local economy.

5.3 Each work stream will be led by a Group Head of Service reporting directly into the council's Renewal Co-ordination Board. In line with the council's standard programme management methodology, progress will be closely monitored and risks, issues and dependencies actively managed. Monthly update reports will be submitted to Tactical Portfolio Holder meetings so that members remain equally informed.

## **6.0 Work Streams**

6.1 Each of the established renewal work streams has a specific focus underpinned by a list of clear objectives. These are linked directly to specific activities within the Road to Renewal Plan. Each activity simultaneously supports a key Council Plan commitment, ensuring necessary alignment across the scope of activity being undertaken by the council over the next 12 months. This will ensure that the council is clear about its priorities and enable the response to be as effective as possible.

### **6.2 Work Stream 1 - Community**

6.2.1 The community response to Covid-19 across Watford was positive, strong and highlighted the huge number of community, voluntary and charitable groups that exist within the town. Supporting the Council Plan theme to create ‘a healthy and happy town’ and aligned to the county-wide priorities for community and health and wellbeing, the Community work stream, led by the Group Head of Community and Environmental Services, seeks to harness this positive aspect of the recent crisis as well as identifying how our community can be supported following the ongoing response to Covid-19 and the subsequent lockdowns. This will include maintaining and utilising the army of volunteers who signed up to help the most vulnerable in our community, ensuring that those who need it continue to be supported, including those with mental health issues and those who are digitally isolated, and celebrating the town’s community response to the crisis.

6.2.2 With this in mind, Community work stream will deliver our Delivery Plan commitments to:

- Commemorate Watford’s response to Covid-19
- Develop services to support our residents’ health and wellbeing, including those with mental health issues
- Support the voluntary sector in Watford to provide positive outcomes for those in need
- Address digital isolation

6.3.3 Specifically aligning with the county-wide activity, the Community work stream will address mental health concerns, feed into the development of a shared health and wellbeing strategy, deliver plans to sustain community activation and contribute, in conjunction with our corporate Delivery Plan 2020-22, to celebrating heritage, culture and leisure, addressing homelessness and housing delivery and protecting our green spaces and environment.

6.2.4 The above objectives will be delivered by a range of specific activities. Full details of the activities planned to meet the council’s renewal objectives in relation to the Community work stream can be found within Our Road to Renewal Plan in Appendix 1.

### **6.3 Work Stream 2 - Business and Economy**

6.3.1 The economic consequences of Covid19 are likely to be significant for Watford. With one of the Council Plan’s themes being to ‘create a thriving, diverse and creative town’, this work stream, led by the Group Head of Place Shaping, provides a focus on how the council can not only support the local economy to survive the economic shock of lockdown but also to revive and then thrive.

- 6.3.2 Significant progress has been made in this area over the past 14 months. We have revolutionised the way in which we engage with our local businesses through a fundamental review and relaunch of our business forums, the introduction of our key accounts programme and the implementation of our business CRM. We have supported the High Street to reopen by launching our Summer of Fun events programme, continuing to provide public health advice for businesses and facilitating social distancing in the town centre through the use of road closures, signposting, marshalling and planters. We have launched the UK's very first Whatsapp High Street and effectively and efficiently administered a whole range of grants to support businesses impacted by lockdown.
- 6.3.3 We have also developed our new Economic Growth Strategy and, based on this, a comprehensive programme of activity has been established within the Business and Economy work stream to drive forward the economy of the town supporting the re-opening of the Town Centre, invigorating small and medium businesses and attracting and retaining big businesses. Building upon our recent Levelling Up Fund bid to Central Government, the Business and Economy work stream will therefore focus on the delivery of the following Economic Growth Strategy priorities:
- Develop a thriving and productive Economy
  - Support our key sectors
  - Create a new economic future for the Town Centre
  - Support our communities to access opportunities
  - Create the right environment for sustainable growth
- 6.3.2 To deliver the scale of the council's ambition outlined in the Economic Growth Strategy, the Business and Economy work stream will have the following objectives:
- Maximise the benefits of working across Hertfordshire to help shape our economic future and respond to current challenges
  - Support businesses to thrive
  - Ensure employment space and Investment opportunities are available
  - Support our key sectors
  - Create Watford's Place Based Narrative and marketing approach
  - Support Town Centre businesses
  - Develop a planning framework for Watford town centre to encourage investment and improve accessibility
  - Further enhance the marketing and promotion of Watford Town centre

- Ensure Watford residents benefit from economic growth and as a council consider how inclusive our economic decisions are
- Deliver an effective and efficient infrastructure
- Manage environmental impact across the Borough

6.3.3 Specifically aligning with the county-wide activity, the Business and Economy work stream will contribute to the Hertfordshire ambition to upskill and reskill residents across the county, improve digital infrastructure, support key sectors, incentivise new and expanding businesses and focus on Town Centre recovery and regeneration.

6.3.4 The above objectives will be delivered by a range of specific activities. Full details of the activities planned to meet the council's renewal objectives in relation to the Business and Economy work stream can be found within Our Road to Renewal Plan in Appendix 1.

#### **6.4 Work Stream 3 - Organisational Renewal**

6.4.1 The council has operated very effectively throughout the pandemic and continues to do so with service and project delivery having continued with relatively limited impact to customers and good levels of performance maintained throughout. Linking in with the Council Plan ambition to create 'a council that serves its residents', the Organisational Renewal work stream, led by the Group Head of Transformation, has focused on the activity needed to respond to the impact of the pandemic on the organisation and our staff.

6.4.2 Since approval of the Road to Renewal plan in July 2020, we have worked to address any backlog caused by Covid-19, have put in place a number of Covid-19 safety measures for our staff and customers, supported the opening of a vaccination centre at the Town Hall, undertaken risk assessments across the organisation and launched new service plans organisation-wide to ensure collective delivery of our Council Plan. We have also updated our policies and processes, increased the ability for our customers to transact with us online and introduced a whole range of support measures for staff, including a specific focus on health and wellbeing and mental health.

6.4.3 The immediate future, however, remains uncertain. Central government has suggested that restrictions may return over the winter months if Covid-19 and other seasonal viruses place pressure upon the NHS and it is therefore important that the council is in a position to positively react to these changes, ensuring that service delivery can be maintained and we are able to respond to any new challenges.

6.4.4 With this in mind, the Organisational Renewal work stream will deliver our Delivery Plan objectives to:

- Manage our organisational renewal post Covid-19
- Ensure that the council's future office accommodation is fit for purpose
- Embed resilience across the organisation
- Deliver the council's financial recovery

6.4.5 Specifically aligning with the county-wide activity, the Organisational Renewal work stream will address public sector resilience and preparedness, building upon the work which allowed us to continue successfully operating in challenging circumstances through the second and third national lockdowns.

6.4.6 The above objectives will be delivered by a range of specific activities. Full details of the activities planned to meet the council's renewal objectives in relation to the Organisational Renewal work stream can be found within Our Road to Renewal Plan in Appendix 1.

6.4.7 Our Organisational Renewal work stream will also be delivered in the context of our Reimagining Watford project, as part of the Town Hall Quarter programme. The positive way in which our staff have responded to the pandemic and the impact on their ways of working over the past 16 months has enabled us to continue consistent service delivery. However, engagement with our staff has also indicated that they have enjoyed the greater flexibility of working from home and in a more agile way, although the lack of face to face contact has made collaboration challenging. Reimagining Watford seeks to harness some of the benefits gained from this agile way of working, such as a better work/life balance, decreased costs for accommodation and less vehicles on our roads, whilst addressing the desire for increased collaboration and networking. The Organisation Renewal work stream will be a key strand in the delivery of this vision by overseeing the introduction of hybrid technology, supporting our staff to enable them to work in a new and flexible way and linking in with the Town Hall Quarter programme ambition to create modern, fit for purpose, sustainable and value for money officers for our staff to collaborate in.

## **7.0 The need for agility**

7.1 The ongoing uncertainties associated with the pandemic are likely to continue with the long term impact to the local, regional, national and global economy making it almost impossible to look further ahead at this juncture. This has been confirmed by the government's recent announcement relating to the plans for Autumn and Winter 2021/22 in which the high degree of uncertainty which surrounds the pandemic and the national reaction to the virus was emphasised.

7.2 In light of this, the Road to Renewal plan governance has been designed to ensure

that the council can continue to react in as agile a way as possible in delivering the Plan, whilst maintaining clear decision-making and accountability. A robust change control process will be applied so any deviation from the approved Road to Renewal plan can be assessed and formally approved with appropriate oversight and an understanding of the impact on deliverables elsewhere within the programme of works. The established reporting lines to the Renewal Coordination Board, who will meet on at least a fortnightly basis, will ensure ongoing oversight of any changes.

## **8.0 Implications**

### **8.1 Financial**

8.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that a renewal budget of £1.2m was approved by Cabinet upon the approval of the original Road to Renewal plan. To date, this budget has funded a number of key initiatives for the town, including the Watford Market Lates event, Watford Outdoor Theatre, development of our voluntary sector strategy, High Street planters to aid social distancing whilst improving the street scene, our business CRM and an enhanced focus on economic development and town centre support. Budget has also been committed to supporting the next phase of the Watford Junction gateway scheme and project resourcing meaning £695,200 of the overall budget remains.

8.1.2 As previously, any requested draw down of funds from the Renewal budget will be made via a formal funding request to the Renewal Coordination Board initially with subsequent review by Tactical Portfolio Holders and approval by the Elected Mayor. However, it is recommended that the approval of expenditure of less than £5,000 is delegated to the Managing Director in her capacity as Chair of the Renewal Coordination Board.

8.1.3 In terms of the financial recovery of the organisation itself, this will be managed through the Organisational Renewal work stream and will be overseen by the Shared Director of Finance. However, it should be noted that the council's financial position is stronger than many other authorities as a result of our property investment portfolio which continues to be carefully managed and overseen by the Property Investment Board.

### **8.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)**

8.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that the legal implications are contained within the body of the report.

### **8.3 Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

8.3.1 Equalities Impact Assessment

Under s149 (1) of the Equality Act 2010 the council must have due regard, in the exercise of its functions, to the need to –

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them
- foster good relations between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them.

As the Road to Renewal plan represents a significant package of activities, an equalities impact analysis was undertaken upon development of the original plan. The Equalities Impact Assessment has since been reviewed in line of this refreshed plan and the conclusions of the analysis remain that nothing contained within the Road to Renewal Plan will adversely impact upon a person with protected characteristics.

The Equality Impact Analysis notes that, like all organisations and local authorities, Watford is restricted by the national guidelines relating to social distancing. If these are reintroduced as a result of a localised outbreak, some of the community events planned could not be attended by individuals shielding. However, the council will continue to follow national guidance and should there be a localised outbreak of Covid-19, it is unlikely that any such event would go ahead.

### 8.3.2 Data Protection Impact Assessment

Having had regard to the council's obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, it is considered that officers are not required to undertake a Data Processing Impact Assessment (DPIA) for this report.

## 8.4 Staffing

8.4.1 It is recognised that Our Road to Renewal represents a significant level of additional activity for the council. However, staffing is anticipated to remain the same as previously approved.

8.4.2 It should also be noted that it has been the resilience and dedication of our staff which has enabled to council to continue operating so effectively throughout the pandemic. Our Organisational Development Strategy, approved as part of the Strategic Framework in July 2020, acknowledged the integral role that staff play in the delivery of services for our residents, businesses and community. Staff have continued to work effectively throughout the pandemic, in many cases and in common with employees across the country, balancing home working with maintaining service delivery in challenging circumstances. Many members of staff

were redeployed to other service areas or to directly support our Covid-19 response on the front line. Others were able to continue service delivery whilst working in a completely different way from usual and with reduced resources. A range of support and recognition schemes have been in place and our refreshed Road to Renewal plan should be read in conjunction with our Organisational Development Strategy and our ongoing efforts to support, invest in and recognise the significant work undertaken by staff from across the council.

## **8.5 Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

8.5.1 Having reviewed the Road to Renewal Plan in line with section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998, it is not considered that any activity provided within the plan would increase crime and disorder in the area.

## **8.6 Sustainability**

8.6.1 The Road to Renewal Plan recognises the opportunity for both the town and council to emerge from the Covid-19 crisis in a sustainable way. The plans for the town under the Business and Economy work stream specifically reference the need to support low carbon businesses and include a whole range of sustainable transport plans, building upon the Sustainable Transport Strategy which is currently out for consultation.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Our Road to Renewal plan

## Watford Borough Council Road to Renewal Plan

### Work Stream 1: Community

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<b>DELIVERY PLAN OBJECTIVE</b>	
Celebrate our diversity, heritage and culture to make Watford a place for people to succeed from childhood to old age	
<b>Commitment</b>	
Commemorate Watford's response to Covid-19	
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will work with our community to provide opportunities for reflection and commemoration of Covid-19.</li> <li>• We will acknowledge the sacrifice made by key workers on behalf of the town, its residents and businesses.</li> <li>• We will bring together and thank our community for the town's collective response to Covid-19.</li> <li>• We will recognise the community spirit across the town during the pandemic.</li> <li>• We will collectively reflect on the personal losses of the town's citizens.</li> </ul>	As part of the Queens' Jubilee Green Canopy, we will establish a ring of trees in the Cassiobury Park around the Bandstand which can also act as a place of reflection for residents of all backgrounds and cultures
	Work with our community to design and install a Public Arts memorial to mark the pandemic
	Partake annually in NHS, Social Care and Frontline Workers Day, marking the service and sacrifice of all frontline workers who have served the town throughout the pandemic
	Launch and continue to promote our Community Hero scheme, recognising those who have contributed to the town's response to Covid-19 and those who are integral to supporting our renewal
	Support the Watford BID 'above & beyond' awards to recognise the significant contribution made by individuals to support our town centre
	Lead a town-wide remembrance event to bring our town together and recognise those residents who have list their lives throughout the pandemic and the families and communities that have been impacted by Covid-19

<b>Commitment</b>	
Develop services to support our residents' health and wellbeing, including those with mental health issues	
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will ensure that support is in place for residents whose mental health has been impacted by Covid-19 and subsequent lockdowns.</li> <li>We will support our residents who are asked to self-isolate</li> <li>We will assist residents to make informed decisions about Covid-19 vaccinations</li> <li>We will continue to practically support the vaccine roll out across the town</li> <li>We will work to reduce health inequalities</li> </ul>	Provide support for residents whose mental health has been impacted by Covid-19 through the Watford Healthy Hub and other measures
	Continue to effectively and efficiently administer test and trace payments to those residents asked to self-isolate and provide targeted education to the community in order to address non-observance of self-isolation rules
	Ensure accurate information on Covid vaccinations reaches all areas of our community by continuing to work closely with faith groups, community leaders and others across the town to relieve any winter pressure on our health and care services
	Facilitate the vaccination effort, including the booster jab programme, by utilising space at the Town Hall as a vaccination centre and continue to arrange walk in vaccination centres for residents of all ages
	Collaboratively work with internal and external stakeholders to reduce health inequalities in relation to vaccine uptake, and engage with disadvantaged groups within our communities to address any issues that may be barriers to them being vaccinated
	Continue our ambitious events programme, including utilising green spaces across the borough, to promote the use of award winning parks and contribute towards the health and wellbeing of our residents
	Work with the County Council, Hertfordshire district and borough councils and other key partners, such as the Hertfordshire Growth Board, Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, Police and NHS to develop a shared health and wellbeing strategy that will benefit all of our residents
<b>DELIVERY PLAN OBJECTIVE</b>	
Work even more closely with the voluntary and community sector, to build a resilient community where people support each other	
<b>Commitment</b>	
Support the voluntary sector in Watford to provide positive outcomes for those in need	
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will support charities and the voluntary sector impacted by Covid-19.</li> <li>We will strengthen our relationship with the voluntary and charitable sector.</li> <li>We will support the voluntary sector to remain sustainable</li> <li>We will harness the positive joint working across the sector and with the council throughout Covid-19.</li> </ul>	Support the Voluntary and Community Sector to build financial resilience and diversify income streams alongside traditional fundraising
	Work with Watford and Three Rivers Trust (W3RT) to create a proactive action plan to better engage with all parts of the Voluntary and Community Sector, particularly those that support underrepresented communities (including those from ethnic minority communities and those smaller groups that may not have their own physical spaces) to enhance community cohesion

	Establish the Community Fund as a lasting pillar of support for Watford's voluntary sector
	Deliver our Voluntary Sector Strategy and associated action plan
	Building on the investment in our Colosseum and our focused support throughout the pandemic on our cultural organisations, engage with our Voluntary and Community Sector to ensure that their space requirements are understood and we work with them to find appropriate space across all of the community and cultural assets so that they can best serve the residents of Watford
<b>DELIVERY PLAN OBJECTIVE</b>	
Make sure our council is a caring and collaborative organisation that puts what matters to people at the heart of everything we do	
<b>Commitment</b>	
Address digital isolation	
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will retain the strong volunteer network established during Covid-19 to help address the issue of digital isolation</li> <li>We will support those residents who do not have the skills to use digital devices</li> <li>We will support our residents from disadvantaged backgrounds who do not have access to digital devices</li> <li>We will ensure that information and advice in relation to the support is available</li> <li>We will ensure that we promote and champion digital device recycling</li> </ul>	Work with partners/volunteers/community groups to provide access to devices and digital training
	Develop a training programme to train volunteers to go out into the community and support people with using a range of digital devices including iPad, laptop, smart phone
	Source digital devices for distribution to the community to support the delivery of getting people digitally connected
	Help people to become digitally connected online by training them to use apps for grocery shopping and connecting with friends and family
	Support the development of a centralised database detailing resources available to support individuals
	Encourage businesses and organisations to contribute towards digital device recycling

## Work Stream 2: Business and Economy

<b>ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY PRIORITY</b> Develop a Thriving and Productive Economy	
<b>Objective</b> Maximise the benefits of working across Hertfordshire to help shape our economic future and respond to current challenges	
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will drive the economic recovery of Watford</li> <li>We will implement our Economic Growth Strategy plan</li> <li>We will support businesses to survive, restart and recover</li> <li>We will deliver commercial space</li> <li>We will create opportunities for businesses</li> <li>We will attract investment to Watford</li> <li>We will Review, Renew and Repurpose Watford's work spaces</li> </ul>	Maximise the benefits of working with Hertfordshire wide organisations
	Maximise the benefits from Watford's position at the heart of Functional Economic Market Area (FEMA) in South West Hertfordshire by aligning planning and other policies. This will ensure Watford benefits from and supports growth in other economic areas
	Maximise the benefits from the work of the Herts Growth Board
	Respond to challenges to the economy and community presented by the Covid-19 pandemic, working with Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership as part of a cross Hertfordshire response and taking advantage of any funding opportunities, building upon the recent application for Levelling Up funding.
	Respond to opportunities and challenges presented by Brexit and the new regulatory framework working with Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership
	Respond to the Climate Emergency

<b>Objective</b> Supporting Businesses To Thrive	
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>
<i>Cont.</i>	Continue to develop effective engagement channels with businesses, so that we as a council we can champion their interests in Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, support networking and channel funding and signpost support to businesses where appropriate
	Continue to support businesses throughout the duration of the remainder of the pandemic
	Extend business engagement to encourage firms to make use of innovation funds and business support offers

	Use our account management system to help us understand the issues facing our largest employers
	Provide the conditions and assets, such as workspace, to encourage innovative companies to base and development themselves in Watford
	Support start-ups and scale-ups, including through the development of an Innovation and Incubation Hub as part of the Town Hall Quarter
	Review and relaunch Watford's Inward Investment Strategy

<b>Objective</b> Ensure Employment space and Investment opportunities are available	
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>
<i>Cont.</i>	Protect existing employment space
	Work with developers to establish demand for high quality office space
	Deliver new employment space in the district, including a new Innovation and Incubation Hub as part of the Town Hall Quarter programme
	Work with the NHS to understand the timescale and support the extension of the Watford Hospital redevelopment
	Recognise the importance of the Watford Junction area and move forward with plans to create a new multi-purpose Watford neighbourhoods in this well connected area

<b>ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY PRIORITY</b> Support our key sectors	
<b>Objective</b> Support our key sectors	
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will leverage our sectors</li> <li>We will attract investment to Watford</li> </ul>	<b>Cross sector initiatives</b> Work with Herts Local Enterprise Partnership to develop and deliver sector action plans which support our key sectors and businesses

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will drive the economic recovery of Watford</li> <li>We will implement our Economic Growth Strategy plan</li> </ul>	<b>Key sector identification</b> - <i>Professional Services, Creative, Cultural Digital and film, Healthcare (medical services, medical equipment and pharma), Retail, Leisure and Hospitality</i>
	Work with all sectors to understand their plans and priorities, accommodation and skills needs
	Seek to retain existing businesses and work with them to attract similar businesses to co-locate here
	Prioritise key sectors in the Inward Investment Strategy
	Work with Hertfordshire Local Enterprise Partnership, neighbouring districts and Herts Growth Board on a Creative and Screen Industries Working Group.
	Work with cultural entrepreneurs to establish the demand for space for cultural enterprises and identify opportunities to provide it
	Work with film studios, town centre strategic partners, Watford BID and high street occupiers to establish the potential to adapt the town centre so it can be used more regularly for filming

<b>ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY PRIORITY</b>	
Create a new economic future for the Town Centre	
<b>Objective</b>	
Create Watford's place based brand narrative and marketing approach	
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will reimagine the High Street, public realm and outside space</li> <li>We will champion and promote Watford effectively</li> <li>We will attract investment to Watford</li> <li>We will Review, Renew and Repurpose Watford's Town Centre</li> </ul>	Develop a shared vision, strategy and town centre partnership management approach for Watford town centre which aligns with our wider place brand narrative across the town
	Ensure that Watford town centre promotes a diverse experience and is a welcoming place

<b>Objective</b> Supporting Town Centre businesses	
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>
<i>Cont.</i>	Build on the close relationships we have developed with retail hospitality and cultural sector businesses to trade safely and adapt to the new environment
	Make the case for our Innovation and Incubation Hub, utilising any successful Levelling Up Fund bid from our recent application, to support local businesses and start-ups across the town

<b>Objective</b> Master-planning, Investment and Accessibility	
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>
<i>Cont.</i>	Develop a planning framework for Watford town centre
	Improve the public realm and utilisation of recreational space
	Transform the heart of Watford by delivering major improvements such as Town Hall Quarter (following the recent bid for Levelling Up funding) and other keys sites and facilitating the development of Watford Junction

<b>Objective</b> Develop marketing and promotion of Watford town centre	
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>
<i>Cont.</i>	Develop the place based narrative strategy for the town centre, which aligns to the wider brand narrative for the town
	Review the delivery mechanisms for marketing and promoting Watford
	Ensure that the local economy works as a component of the wider local community

<b>ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY PRIORITY</b>	
Support our communities to access opportunities	
<b>Objective</b>	
Consider how inclusive our economic decisions are	
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will support people into employment, education and training</li> <li>We will create community wealth</li> <li>We will champion inclusivity</li> <li>We will leverage the council's scale and expertise</li> </ul>	Use our economic spending power to create opportunities locally
	Ensure the right mix of facilities, services and transport links as part of new developments the council is responsible for, to create new well-designed communities
	Work with those residents in sectors most impacted by the pandemic, such as retail and hospitality
	Support our current and future workforce to be resilient following the pandemic, ensuring residents can access support for improving or developing new skills and increasing their employability, and for maintaining/improving their mental health
	Work with the Herts Skills and Employment Board, University of Hertfordshire, West Herts College, other providers and Local Businesses in our key sectors to develop and deliver a Watford skills and employment strategy
	Support the delivery of apprenticeships
	Attract new highly skilled workers and retain talented people in the Borough

<b>ECONOMIC GROWTH STRATEGY PRIORITY</b>	
Create the right environment for sustainable growth	
<b>Objective</b>	
Deliver an effective and efficient infrastructure	
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>We will ensure the town's infrastructure supports and attracts local business and the wider economy</li> <li>We will develop better places to live, work and relax</li> <li>We will Review, Renew and Repurpose Watford's work spaces</li> </ul>	Seek to maximise the growth benefits from planned infrastructure improvements
	Deliver high quality housing with a particular focus on increasing housing options to attract and retain residents/ employees

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• We will support a green recovery</li> <li>• We will stimulate green economic growth</li> <li>• We will launch a green skills academy</li> <li>• We will embrace 21<sup>st</sup> Century Sustainable Mobility</li> </ul>	Encourage the delivery of high-speed broadband to attract new investment/ support the growth of businesses and housing
	Create a sustainable transport strategy for the town
	Ensure that the town's infrastructure attracts local business and supports the wider economy

<b>Objective</b>	
Managing environmental impact across the Borough	
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>
<i>Cont.</i>	Encourage low carbon businesses to invest and grow in the borough

## Work Stream 3: Organisational Renewal

<b>DELIVERY PLAN OBJECTIVE</b>	
Deliver high quality sustainable services	
<b>Commitment</b>	
Manage our organisational renewal post Covid-19	
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ongoing delivery of our Council Plan and business as usual services</li> <li>Delivery of excellent services for our customers in a Covid-safe way</li> <li>Services that remain accessible to all, including via digital channels where possible</li> <li>Ongoing interest and engagement in local democracy</li> </ul>	We will continue to report regularly to Cabinet on progress against our Council Plan and highlight where our plans have been disrupted by the uncertain Covid-19 situation. We will also let our residents and businesses know how we have delivered against our Council Plan
	We will continue to review our risk assessments on a regular basis to protect our customers and staff, and will respond accordingly when the risk of Covid-19 changes
	We will continue to support our community and our health and care services by providing the Town Hall as our local vaccination centre, adapting our customer service centre so that we can continue to provide an excellent service to both our residents seeking council services and those wanting a vaccination
	We will continue to make sites available across Watford to support Covid-19 testing and other similar activity to support the response to the pandemic and protect our health and care services
	We will ensure that all council processes utilise existing council technology so that customers, whether residents or businesses, can transact with the council at a time that suits them, not just during the council's traditional opening hours
	We will retain the broadcasting of key council meetings online, building on the foundations established during Covid and introducing hybrid meeting solutions, to ensure our decision making is as transparent and accessible as possible and allows our residents to actively engage in local democracy
<b>DELIVERY PLAN OBJECTIVE</b>	
Welcome innovation, technology and new ways of working to continuously improve	
<b>Commitment</b>	
Ensure that the council's future office accommodation is fit for purpose	
<b>What we want to achieve</b>	<b>How we will do it</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An agile workforce that can provide an excellent service to customers no matter from where they are working</li> </ul>	Learning from the experience of Covid-19 and the extended period of colleagues working from home, we will understand what the needs of the council and colleagues are in the future, using learning from our regular staff surveys to inform our Reimagining Watford project as part of the Town Hall Quarter

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Shared spaces which will foster joint working and collaboration</li> <li>• A corporate culture which values outcomes and benefits, rather than inputs and presenteeism</li> </ul>	<p>Through our Reimagining Watford project, we will continue to engage regularly with the Staff Ambassador Group and our Management Group so that our values and behaviours are co-designed</p> <p>We will bring our teams back together with our Reimagining Watford project, allowing them to develop Agile Charters which will determine the way in which they can best serve our customers in the future.</p> <p>Learning the lessons from Covid-19 and based on our new ways of working, we will, as part of our ambitious Town Hall Quarter programme, develop modern, fit for purpose, sustainable and value for money offices for our staff to collaborate in</p> <p>We will provide our staff with the tools and technology they need to provide the best experience to customers, no matter where they are working from</p>
<p><b>DELIVERY PLAN OBJECTIVE</b> Welcome innovation, technology and new ways of working to continuously improve</p>	
<p><b>Commitment</b> Embed resilience across the organisation</p>	
<p><b>What we want to achieve</b></p>	<p><b>How we will do it</b></p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Understand the impact of Covid-19 on the health and wellbeing of staff</li> <li>• Excellent services that can continue to operate as we learn to live with Covid</li> <li>• A healthy, safe and educated workforce</li> </ul>	<p>We will continue to ensure that our staff are supported to work safely in the community by undertaking regular risk assessments (including specific risk assessments which recognise the increased risk of the virus for our ethnic minority colleagues) and putting in place measures to mitigate the impact of Covid-19</p> <p>We will remain in regular contact with staff, understand the difficulties they have faced and provide support through 'Watford Health and You' for them depending on their own circumstances</p> <p>We will continue our Time to Talk initiative, providing space for staff to reconnect and support their and colleagues' mental health</p> <p>We will regularly update our business continuity plans to recognise the need to live with Covid so that we can continue to deliver excellent services to our customers</p> <p>As we move out of the pandemic our commitment to developing our people outlined in our Organisational Development Strategy will grow so that they fulfil their potential and their aspirations. All our staff will participate in a meaningful appraisal, where performance, aspirations and potential are equally important, and we will actively seek development opportunities for our staff, retaining and growing our key talent to ensure that we can retain our talented teams</p> <p>We will continue to promote the benefits of Covid vaccinations to our staff to encourage take up and ensure that the organisation is less vulnerable to local outbreaks.</p> <p>We will offer all our staff a flu jab to mitigate any impact of winter variations in the number of Covid cases and the expectation of a bad flu season, supporting our health and care services</p>

We will provide our managers with a menu of options that can be used to support staff and their health and wellbeing, including time away from video calls and sufficient breaks between meetings

**DELIVERY PLAN OBJECTIVE**

Focus our budget so we can deliver on our commitments and secure investment to work for Watford

**Commitment**

Deliver the council's financial recovery

**What we want to achieve**

- A sustainable and balanced budget which continues to support delivery of our services as well as our ambitious Council Plan
- Sufficient financial support to help the town, our residents, businesses and community recover and renew from Covid-19
- A robust local supply chain able to support our services and portfolio of projects

**How we will do it**

- We will proactively manage our Renewal budget, ensuring that we are able to support our communities and businesses as they recover from Covid-19 and are able to thrive within our town
- We will set a 2022/23 budget which allows us to deliver our Council Plan whilst supporting business as usual services for our residents, businesses and community
- We will continue to monitor the impact of Covid-19 on our budgets and if necessary will reset our finances in the light of the pressures created by Covid-19 and based on insight about possible future pressures which will allow us to fund priorities to help Watford recover
- We will close our grants processes by the financial year end but retain plans to scale this back up if required in the future so that our community and businesses continue to get the support they need
- We will contribute fully locally and nationally to the work being carried out to identify the impact on district councils and lobby for additional resources to support our Road to Renewal Plan whilst continuing to deliver services for our residents and businesses
- We will review all existing projects and contracts to assess the potential impact of supply chain disruption and other Covid-19 impacts so that we can continue to deliver the best possible service to our residents and businesses
- We will continue to carefully manage our property investment portfolio, ensuring that it continues to provide invaluable financial stability so we can continue to deliver our high quality services and ambitious programme of improvements for our local residents and businesses

# Agenda Item 7

Part A

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date of meeting:** Monday, 4 October 2021

**Report author:** Contract Manager - Parks and Streetcare

**Title:** Litter Strategy for Watford 2021- 2026

## 1.0 Summary

- 1.1 This report presents a Litter Strategy for Watford 2021-2026. The strategy is attached as Appendix 1.
- 1.2 Following consultation, this report and strategy has received input from relevant council departments, the council's Environmental Services partner Veolia, feedback from Portfolio Holders in March 2021 and Leadership Board in August 2021.
- 1.3 Development of the strategy secured £25,000 funding from WRAP's Litter Binfrastucture Grant and aligns with the aims of the *Litter Strategy for England (DEFRA 2015)* and resulting national guidance *The Right Bin in the Right Place (WRAP 2020)*.
- 1.4 Adoption of a Litter Strategy for Watford would enable litter and littering behaviour to be dealt with more effectively. It introduces some new ideas and processes to enhance service provision and standards, as well as improving current processes. An Action Plan has been produced as part of the strategy summarising operational, education, awareness and enforcement activities that already take place or are to be introduced. The strategy contains clearly defined governance and monitoring practices.
- 1.5 The Litter Strategy will be delivered within existing service provision and resources, and much is already carried out as business as usual and included within the Environmental Services contract with Veolia.

## 2.0 Risks

- 2.1 If the council does not adopt the Litter Strategy, this would breach a condition of the grant being awarded.

### 3.0 Recommendations

3.1 That Cabinet approves the Litter Strategy for Watford at Appendix 1 to this report.

**Further information:**

Hayley Page

hayley.page@watford.gov.uk

**Report approved by:** Chris Fennell, Head of Leisure & Environmental Services

### 4.0 Detailed proposal

#### 4.1 Introduction

4.1.1 Litter is a local, national and worldwide issue. A Litter Strategy for England was published by DEFRA in 2017, and aims to apply best practice in education, enforcement and infrastructure in order to deliver a substantial reduction in litter and littering behaviour. A Litter Strategy for Watford would support the aims of this national litter strategy, as well as taking into consideration local circumstances, to ensure local solutions that meet local needs. It would also complement and support some of the council's other strategies including the Sustainability Strategy and Green Spaces Strategy.

4.1.2 One of the commitments of the Litter Strategy for England was to produce new guidance on "binrastructure" (the design, number and location of public litter bins and other items of street furniture) for local areas to help reduce levels of litter at a local level. This guidance The Right Bin in the Right Place (2020) has now been published by WRAP and has been used to steer the development of Watford's own Litter Strategy.

4.1.3 In order to encourage local authorities to produce their own litter strategies, and to support local authorities in dealing with litter, WRAP launched the Litter Binrastructure Grant in December 2020. Funding of up to £25,000 could be applied for, towards the purchase of new litter bins, enhancement of existing bins and some associated infrastructure.

4.1.4 Watford Borough Council has been successful in its application for the maximum grant amount of £25,000. A requirement of the WRAP grant award is adoption of a local Litter Strategy.

## 4.2 Current position and strategy overview

4.2.1 Watford Borough Council routinely spends the following on litter-related cleansing and maintenance activities:

Task	Cost
Litter picking and other routine cleansing activities across the public highway and council-owned spaces such as car parks, private roads, garage areas and service yards	Circa £1.36 million per year
Emptying and cleaning litter bins on the public highway	Circa £447,000 per year
Removing and disposing of litter from green spaces	Circa £55,000 per year

*\* NB. The costs detailed above do not include additional, ad hoc or one off costs*

4.2.2 In 2020/21, Watford Borough Council disposed of 892 tonnes of street cleansing waste, and collected 137 tonnes of waste (mostly litter) from parks.

4.2.3 Many areas of strength have been identified during the development of Watford's Litter Strategy. An audit of existing litter bins has been carried out, and highlights the need to gradually standardise the types of litter bins used with a clearly defined style, colour and signage appropriate for the locations they are situated. All litter bins in the town are emptied at least weekly, and in busier locations this can be up to three times per day. The council and Veolia are able to generate hotspot maps based on recorded reports of issues, in order to determine optimum bin locations and ensure adequate supply. Although the hotspot maps show the worst affected areas to be high footfall retail locations, we are also aware that our most popular parks and open spaces experience littering issues during peak use.

4.2.4 Watford has been known to remove litter bins as a result of attracting fly tipping, and has introduced 'Recycling on the Go' bins to the town centre and our flagship green space - Cassiobury Park, because both locations are high profile and have heavy footfall. At their current locations, the bins are regularly monitored for contamination with non-recyclable materials. The intention is to install further recycling bins at Oxhey Activity Park's new café and Woodside Playing Fields once the new café has opened there.

- 4.2.5 We have developed strong partnerships in Watford, across departments, with contractors, voluntary and community groups, schools, leaseholders e.g. cafés and sports clubs, other local authorities within the county, other statutory duty holders such as the Canal & River Trust and Network Rail, land owners such as Watford Community Housing and the police. We also highly value our relationships with voluntary and community groups, and assist litter picking events within the community by providing equipment, and disposing of any litter (including separated plastic bottles and cans for recycling) that are collected.
- 4.2.6 A particular strength is our environmental cleanliness monitoring regime using former NI 195 survey methodology. Surveys of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting are carried out quarterly and results reported as highly regarded Key Performance Indicators for the council. Along with this we invest heavily in education, awareness and enforcement activities, in order to promote waste reduction, reuse and recycling, and to encourage behaviour change to reduce littering. We support community clean up events and national initiatives such as the Great British Spring Clean, have ambitious aims to eliminate single-use plastics within the council and any partner organisations, a comprehensive schools programme and attendance at a wide range of events in order to engage with voluntary/community groups and members of the public. Our social media presence is strong and we make sure we proactively address local and national issues, support national campaigns and publicise events and achievements. We also have a Town Enforcement Officer dedicated to patrolling the town centre and other hotspots, engaging with members of the public and issuing Fixed Penalty Notices for littering as required.
- 4.2.7 Developing the Litter Strategy has also helped identify some areas for improvement for dealing with litter in Watford. These include more regular bin audits, establishing a clearer process for determining optimum locations, and considering more innovative bin and signage solutions at some litter hotspot locations. The Action Plan within the strategy consolidates the many operational, education, awareness and enforcement activities that already take place as part of routine service delivery and contractual requirements, in order to maintain high standards of cleanliness across the town. The strategy also introduces some new ideas and processes to enhance service provision and standards, as well as clearly defined aims and monitoring practices to ensure regular reviews and ongoing service improvement.

### **4.3 WRAP's Litter Bininfrastructure Grant**

4.3.1 £25,000 has been awarded through WRAP's Litter Bininfrastructure Grant and will be used to help deal with litter issues experienced in Cassiobury Park's busiest hotspot locations, through introducing smart bins with solar powered, compacting technology and sensors, for general litter. These have been proven to have many benefits and are widely used across the country. The bins will include ash trays to help deal with commonly littered cigarette butts, and a foot pedal opening mechanism so that users do not have to touch the bin - particularly essential during the current pandemic.

4.3.2 The council will publicise the smart bins, utilise staff resource to monitor litter levels and bin performance, usage and operational tasks, and empty the bins when required.

### **4.4 Monitoring and evaluation**

4.4.1 The Litter Strategy for Watford has the following aims, in line with the aims of the Street Cleansing, Parks and Open Spaces services:

- To maintain the current baseline cleansing standards across the borough overall and by individual land uses
- To ensure standards of cleanliness and the requirements of the contract are continuously monitored in order to proactively apply the *Zonal Performance and rectification timescales*, to ensure standards of cleanliness and public satisfaction are maintained
- To ensure the gateways into the borough impart a positive image of Watford in being maintained to the required performance standards.
- To achieve the overarching strategic objectives of the council's Green Spaces Strategy.
- To deliver a high quality service to the residents of Watford maintaining or improving on the current customer satisfaction rate of 78% for Street Cleansing service and 96% for the Parks and Open Spaces service

4.4.2 In addition to this:

- To maintain land so it is predominantly free of litter except for some small items, in the most cost/resource efficient way
- To maximise recovery of recyclable materials from waste disposed of on-the-go.
- To support and encourage behaviour change such as waste reduction/reuse/recycling, and appropriate disposal through use of litter bins or taking rubbish home

4.4.3 There are already numerous monitoring practices in place which help measure the amount of litter on the ground and collected from bins, which will continue:

- Recording the tonnages of street cleansing waste take for disposal
- Carrying out quarterly surveys of environmental cleanliness – currently using NI 195 methodology
- Logging of enquiries and complaints
- Monitoring quantity and quality of materials in ‘Recycling on the Go’ bins
- Recording the number of individuals engaged with through school and community outreach, social media
- Staff observations and feedback
- Contractor schedules

4.4.4 Delivery of the Litter Strategy for Watford will be reviewed regularly at contract meetings, progress will be reported to Leadership Board annually and updates on the Action Plan recorded as an appendix.

## 5.0 **Implications**

### 5.1 **Financial**

5.1.1 The Shared Director of Finance comments that the Litter Strategy will be delivered within existing service provision and resources, and much is already carried out as business as usual and included within the Environmental Services contract with Veolia. The delivery of the Strategy is also supported by grant funding of £25,000.

### 5.2 **Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)**

5.2.1 The council will conform to the WRAP grant terms and conditions.

5.2.2 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that it is a condition of the grant from WRAP that the Litter Strategy is adopted before the completion of the grant – funded project.

### 5.3 **Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection**

5.3.1 Having had regard to the council’s obligations under s149 of the Equality Act 2010, it is considered that there are no implications as a result of the recommendations.

5.3.2 Having had regard to the council’s obligations under the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, it is considered that officers are not required to undertake a Data Processing Impact Assessment (DPIA) for this report.

## 5.4 **Staffing**

5.4.1 The Litter Strategy will be delivered within existing service provision and resources, and much is already carried out as business as usual and included within the Environmental Services contract with Veolia.

## 5.5 **Accommodation**

5.5.1 No accommodation implications have been identified as a result of the recommendations.

## 5.6 **Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.6.1 No crime and disorder implications have been identified as a result of the recommendations.

## 5.7 **Sustainability**

5.7.1 The Litter Strategy for Watford supports the council's Sustainability Strategy through encouraging sustainable solutions to waste management, and promoting waste reduction, recycling and reuse messages through education and awareness.

## **Appendices**

- Appendix 1 – Litter Strategy for Watford 2021-2026

## **Background papers**

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report. If you wish to inspect or take copies of the background papers, please contact the officer named on the front page of the report.

- Litter Strategy for England (DEFRA 2017)
- The Right Bin in the Right Place (WRAP 2020)

# Litter Strategy for Watford 2021 to 2026



**WATFORD**  
BOROUGH  
COUNCIL



## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 The national picture

Litter is a prevalent issue both locally, nationally and worldwide. It has detrimental effects on public health and wellbeing, wildlife, the climate, perceptions of a place and the economy. It has been demonstrated that people are less likely to drop litter in a clean environment, which may also be prevented through the opportunity, capability and motivation to dispose of waste correctly. Achieving real change requires concerted action by national government, local government, communities, charities, campaign groups and businesses.

There are a number of policies and legislations which reference the importance of protecting the environment by tackling litter issues. These include:

- DEFRA's *25 Year Environment Plan*
- *Environmental Protection Act 1990*
- ODPM's *Living Places: Cleaner, Safer, Greener (2002)*
- DEFRA's *Code of Practice on Litter and Refuse (2013)*
- DEFRA and Environment Agency's *Resources and Waste Strategy for England (2018)*
- *Litter Act 1983*
- *The Highways Act 1980*
- *Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011 (as amended)*

The government's plans to introduce a Deposit Return Scheme in order to tackle packaging waste may also see a reduction in particular types of litter, such as plastic and glass bottles and cans, within our environment.

A *Litter Strategy for England* was published by DEFRA in 2017 with the ambition to "be the first generation to leave the natural environment of England in a better state than it found it". The national strategy aims to apply best practice in education, enforcement and infrastructure in order to deliver a substantial reduction in litter and littering behaviour. In particular, this is to be achieved through sending a clear and consistent anti-litter message, improving enforcement against offenders and cleaning up the country.

One of the commitments of the *Litter Strategy for England* was to produce new guidance on "binrastructure" (the design, number and location of public litter bins and other items of street furniture) for local areas to help reduce levels of litter at a local level. This guidance *The Right Bin in the Right Place (2020)* has now been published by WRAP and has been used to steer the development of Watford's own Litter Strategy.

## 1.2 Current position in Watford

Watford Borough Council routinely spends the following on litter-related cleansing and maintenance activities:

- Circa £1.36 million per year on litter picking and other routine cleansing activities across the public highway and council-owned spaces such as car parks, private roads, garage areas and service yards
- Circa £447,000 per year on emptying and cleaning litter bins on the public highway
- Circa £55,000 per year on removing and disposing of litter from green spaces

In 2020/21, Watford Borough Council disposed of 892 tonnes of street cleansing waste and 137 tonnes of waste (mostly litter) was collected from parks.

Current measures in place for dealing with litter issues in Watford include regular litter picking, mechanical sweeping, emptying of litter bins, removing/relocating/installing new litter bins as required, enforcement of littering within the town centre and education/awareness through working with schools, voluntary/community groups and supporting national campaigns.

The *Litter Strategy for Watford* takes into consideration local circumstances, to ensure local solutions that meet local needs, as well as those of national strategies and policies. It also compliments and supports some of the council's other strategies including the *Sustainability Strategy* and *Green Spaces Strategy*.

## 2. Watford's Street Cleansing, Parks and Open Spaces Services

Delivery of the council's Street Cleansing, Parks and Open Spaces maintenance services was outsourced to Veolia in 2013, and this contract is in place until 2028.

### 2.1 Service aims and objectives

The key aims for delivery of the Street Cleansing, Parks and Open Spaces services are:

- To maintain the current baseline cleansing standards across the borough overall and by individual land uses
- To ensure standards of cleanliness and the requirements of the contract are continuously monitored in order to proactively apply the *Zonal Performance and rectification timescales*, to ensure standards of cleanliness and public satisfaction are maintained
- To ensure the gateways into the borough impart a positive image of Watford in being maintained to the required performance standards
- To achieve the overarching strategic objectives of the council's Green Spaces Strategy
- To deliver a high quality service to the residents of Watford maintaining or improving on the current customer satisfaction rate of 78% for Street Cleansing service and 96% for the Parks and Open Spaces service

### 2.2 Serviced land

Land that receives the Street Cleansing, Parks and Open Spaces services includes:

- All highway maintainable at public expense including hard surfacing and soft verges. This includes residential streets, subways, high speed roads, tree pits and planted areas
- All council-owned parks and open spaces and facilities within, including playgrounds, sports pitches and courts, water courses and ponds
- The town centre pond
- All council-owned car parks, private roads, garage areas, service yards and other land open to the public
- All land forming part of a shop front entirely open the highway up to the building line only
- All adjoining housing association soft verges and all open commercial frontages and private roads up to and within one metre of the adopted highway or the council-owned land (litter cleansing only)
- Public highway outside of the borough as per any agreement with neighbouring councils e.g. Boundary Way in Three Rivers
- Other private land that may be designated by the council for special cleansing
- Recycling bank sites serviced by the council

Figure 1: Street Cleansing zone map

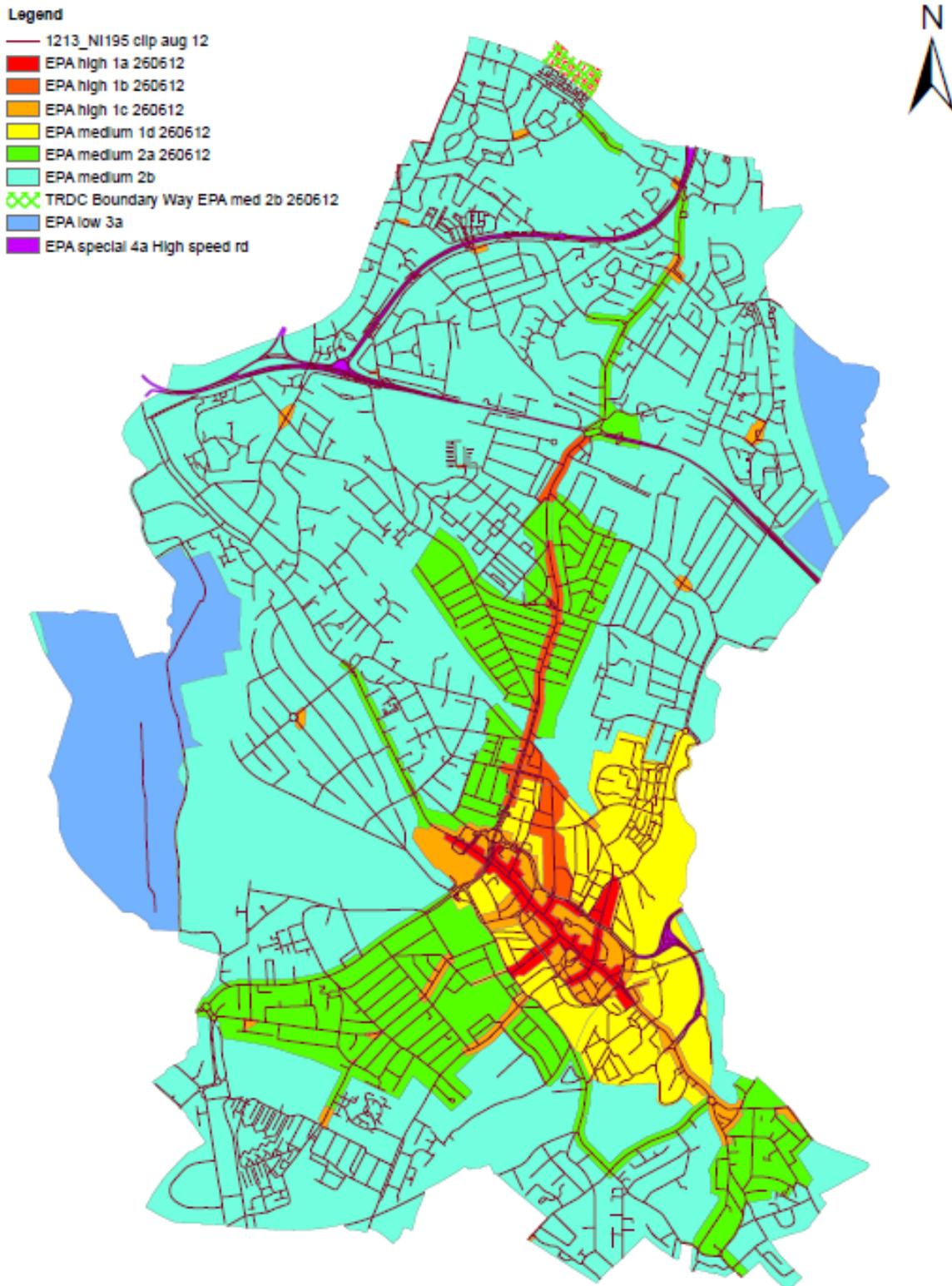
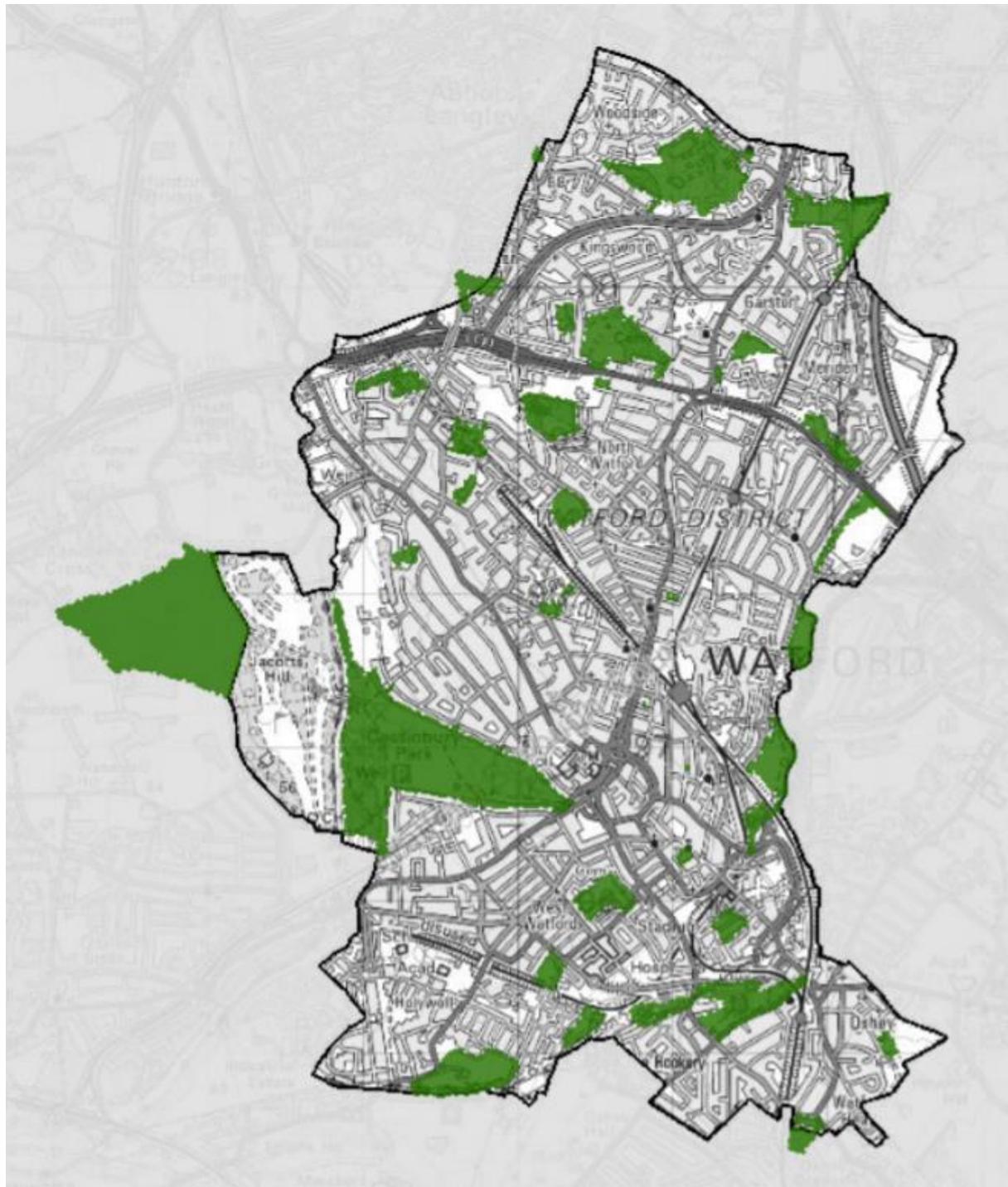


Figure 2: Parks and Open Spaces location map



## 2.3 Required cleansing standards and response times

The borough is split into 8 zones, based on land use and intensity of use – see *Figure 1: Street Cleansing zone map*. In the event that cleanliness (in particular litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting) falls in standard this must be returned to Grade A within the response times detailed in *Figure 3: Zonal performance and rectification timescales*. The timescale to restore the area will commence from the time that notification is received.

**Figure 3: Zonal performance and rectification timescales**

LITTER & DETRITUS – ZONAL PERFORMANCE TABLES & RECTIFICATION TIMESCALES												
Contract Zone	subset	Target Performance - inspection %s						Rectification time to Grade A 08:00 to 18:30 hrs from Grade:-				
		A	B+	B	B-	C	C- & D	B+	B	B-	C	C- & D
1A (core 7 day service) High intensity – Town Centre main retail & commercial including other highways	litter	16	53	29	1.5	0.5	0	4 hrs	2 hrs	30 mins	15 mins	15 mins
	detritus	64	31.5	4.5	0	0	0	1 day	4 hrs	4 hr	15 mins	15 mins
1B & 1C (core 7 day service) High Intensity - other retail & commercial including main roads and other highways	litter	2.5	51	40	6	1	0	1 day	4 hrs	2 hrs	1hr	30 mins
	detritus	45	41.5	11.5	1.5	0.5	0	-	2days	1day	½ day	½ day
1D (core 7 day service) Medium intensity - high density/high obstructed residential associated main roads and other highways	litter	6.5	44	39.5	9	0.5	0.5	5 days	2 days	1day	2 hrs	30 mins
	detritus	14.5	32	34	16	3	0	-	5 days	1day	1days	1/2day
2A and 2B (core 5 day service) Medium intensity - Minor shop fronts high density/high obstructed residential, associated main roads and other highways	Core 5 day service only As Contract Zone 1D											
3A (core 5 day service) Medium & Low intensity – medium and low obstruction residential estates associated main roads, industrial areas and other highways	litter	12	55.5	26	5	1.5	0	21 days	5 days	1 day	4 hrs	2hrs
	detritus	20.5	42	28	7	2	0.5	-	10 days	1 day	4hrs	2hrs
4A (core 5 day service) Special Circumstances – elements of High speed road cleansing specified as requiring mobile or full lane closures		Results incorporated in 1D & 2A and 2B & 3A						-	-	7 days		
		Results incorporated in 1D & 2A and 2B & 3A						-	-	21 days		
TIMESCALES												
15 minutes, 30 minutes, 1 hr and 2hrs - Means rectified within those timescales from when notified unless the remaining service time available from instruction on the day is less in which case it shall be rectified by 08:00 the next calendar day <b>except</b> for contract zone 1A where all rectifications shall be made before works cease on the day.												
1/2 Day means rectified means by 6 p.m. if reported before 1 p.m. or 1 p.m. the next day if reported between 1 p.m. and 6 p.m. the previous day												
1 day means by 6 p.m. the following evening												
Note: where instructed rectifications may be required before 8 a.m. for special events												

**Table 1: Cleansing standards and response times**

Area	Standard / response time
Zones 1a and 1b	Grade A by 8am every day
Zone 1c	Grade A by 10am every day
All events within Zone 1	In accordance with the standard rectification times until 8pm, and completed to Grade A by 8am the following day
Roads affected by Watford Stadium events and other special events outside Zone 1 that either start and/or finish before 5:30pm	Part of the 7 day service, starting within 15 minutes of kick-off or start time and complete to Grade B+ litter within 1 hour, to be continued not later than 30 minutes after the end of the event.
Roads affected by Watford Stadium events and other special events outside Zone 1 starting after 5:30pm	Grade A litter by 8am the following day
Car park areas and Derby Road skate park	Grade A by 10am every day

Sharps and other drug paraphernalia	Removed as part of normal cleansing operations or within 90 minutes of notification
All litter and dog waste bins	Emptied before becoming 75% full
All litter bins in Zone 1a	Must be completely emptied by 8.30am and again between 5:30pm and 7.30pm each day except for the pm requirement on Christmas Day
All litter bins in contract zone 1b and 1c	Must be completely emptied by 10am each day excluding Christmas Day.
All ashtrays attached to litter bins	Emptied on each occasion and washed weekly in Zone 1a and as required in other zones
All water features	Check before 9am daily and remove all litter, food waste and any dead livestock from within 3 metres either side of any water margin or any item whatsoever blocking any fountain, inlet or outlet by 9am and all other items located further within the water feature by 10am
Town centre water feature	Maintained to a B+ standard and rectified in accordance with Zone 1a
Green spaces	All Green Flag sites must be Grade A and all other sites Grade B following any operations. Litter pick before grass cutting.
Gateways	In accordance with zone 1b requirements as a minimum, but increasing to that of Zone 1a if adjoining land.
Car Parks	In accordance with the zone requirement.
Bin washing	A minimum of weekly in Zone 1a and annually elsewhere
Litter and fly tips with 5m of litter bins	Must be removed when litter bin emptied
Spillages on or with 2m of litter bins	Must be removed when litter bin emptied or within 1 hour of notification or by the end of the working day if extra treatment required
Damaged bins	Made safe ASAP and the council notified same working day
Bin repairs	Minor repairs to hinges, locks and liners within 5 working days of being identified, temporary measure to secure the bin immediately. Within 14 working days from the date of the damage, fully repair the bin or replace it with a new bin.

Approved sacks must be used within litter and dog bins to effectively contain their contents during use and transfer in order to maintain hygienic standards and minimise odours.

All bins must be kept in a clean condition inside and outside and free from fly posting, graffiti and spillages. This is particularly important as dirty bins may deter people from using them, resulting in litter being dropped.

## 2.4 Hours of operation

- A 7 day week service in Zone 1a, 1b, 1c and 1d between the core times of 6am to 6:30pm (minimum)
- A 5 day week service in Zones 2a, 2b, 3 and 4 operating between the core times of 7am to 3:30pm (minimum)
- The 7 day service also provides additional street cleansing support and emergency cover across Zones 2, 3 and 4 during weekends and bank holidays

## 2.5 Frequency of cleansing

Most streets in Watford are visited each week by a 'barrow beat' team member who will litter pick, sweep the street and empty litter bins. They will also deal with issues, such as clearing of graffiti or dumped rubbish, where they can or arrange for a specialist team to return. Most streets are also visited weekly by a mechanical street sweeper, to remove litter and debris from areas that they can access.

The Town Centre is kept clean by daily visits from the 'barrow beat' team and mechanical sweepers. Other shopping parades are visited daily for bin emptying and litter picking, and weekly for other street cleansing activities.

All litter bins in the town are empty at least weekly, and in busier locations this can be up to three times per day.

## 2.6 Monitoring of cleansing standards

The Street Cleansing, Parks and Open Spaces contract was designed to be a self-monitoring one.

When a report of litter, overflowing or damaged litter bins (or other street cleansing or parks issue) is logged on Veolia's system Echo, the contractual timescale required to rectify this is measured and recorded. Any failures result in a penalty being issued to Veolia, chargeable through the monthly invoice. In addition to this, the council's online reporting function through the website (Firmstep system, which automatically goes through to Veolia's system Echo) – [www.watford.gov.uk/report-it](http://www.watford.gov.uk/report-it) also records response times.

Street Cleansing and Parks front line operational staff observations and feedback also provides valuable insight. This should be recorded and fed back through contract management meetings.

## 2.7 Measuring of cleansing standards

Currently the levels of environmental cleanliness in Watford are measured using former NI 195 (previously BVPI 199) survey methodology. Although this is no longer a national indicator, the cleanliness of streets and parks across Watford have historically been measured using this method, and continue to be, for a consistent approach.

The NI 195 survey measures the percentage of relevant land and highways that is assessed as having deposits of litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting that fall below an acceptable level, using the following formula:

$$\left( \frac{T + \left( \frac{Tb}{2} \right)}{Ts} \right) * 100$$

- T = number of sites graded C, C-, or D for each individual element (litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting)
- Tb = number of sites graded at B- for each individual element (litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting) (this grade counts as half);
- Ts = total number of sites surveyed for the relevant element (litter, detritus, graffiti and fly posting)

The aim is to reduce the percentage score each year - the lower the score the better the standard of cleanliness.

Each survey is based on a 50m transect (or 50m<sup>2</sup> in a green space). In Watford, 250 surveys are carried out each quarter, equating to 1000 surveys annually. Most of these are carried out by an independent inspector appointed by Veolia, but 25% are carried out jointly with the inspector, Veolia and the council. Each ward is surveyed bi-annually, in alternate quarters, with locations selected across a variety of land uses. Results are produced quarterly and reported as council Key Performance Indicators (KPI), which are highly valued within the organisation.

**Table 2: NI 195 survey grade descriptions with examples**

Grade	Description of Level of Cleanliness	Example of Level of Cleanliness
A	No litter	
B+	Intermediate grade	
B	Area predominately free from litter apart from some small items such as cigarette ends and ring pulls etc.	
B-	Intermediate grade	
C	Widespread distribution of litter and/or refuse within minor accumulations of small items as Grade B and larger items including beverage, fast food packets, animal faeces etc.	

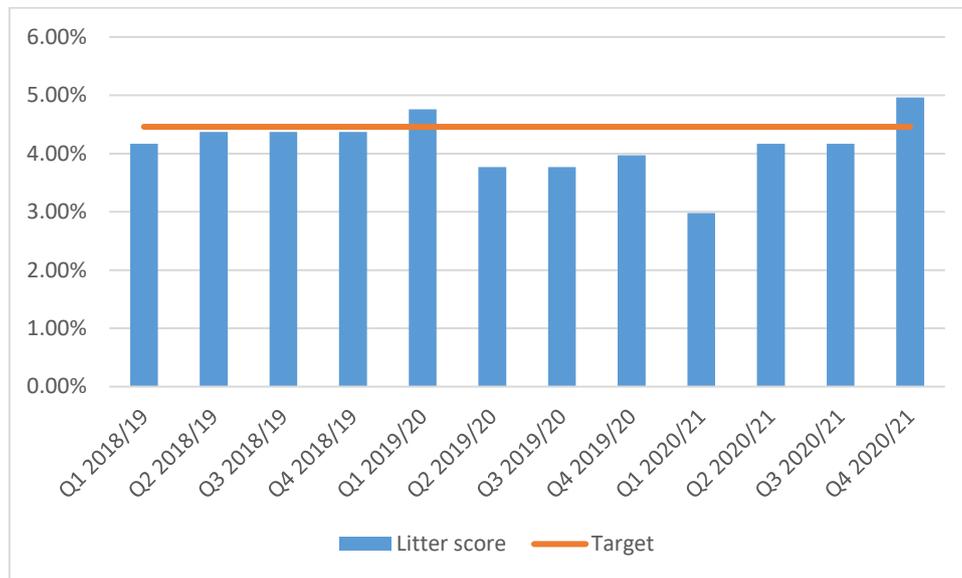
C-	Intermediate grade	
D	Area heavily littered by litter and/or refuse with small and large items with significant accumulations along boundaries.	

**Figure 4: NI 195 survey results and grade percentages to be maintained**

	Land use	subset	Overall LEQS %	Performance - actual site survey percentages by grade						
				A	B+	B	B-	C	C-	D
All CONTRACT & EPA ZONES	LEQS – overall target	litter	4.46	11.28	52.04	29.32	5.83	1.32	0.17	0.06
		detritus	5.48	28.38	36.03	22.00	6.33	1.87	0.00	0.17
	Main retail & commercial	litter	1.24	16.34	52.48	29.21	1.49	0.50	0.00	0.00
		detritus	0.00	63.37	32.18	4.46	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Other retail & commercial	litter	3.71	0.99	48.02	44.06	6.44	0.05	0.00	0.00
		detritus	0.74	42.57	43.56	12.38	1.49	0.00	0.00	0.00
	Housing high obstruction	litter	4.95	6.44	44.06	40.49	7.92	0.50	0.50	0.00
		detritus	13.37	13.86	24.75	38.61	18.81	3.96	0.00	0.00
	Housing med obstruction	litter	3.96	13.37	55.45	24.26	5.94	0.99	0.00	0.00
		detritus	4.95	19.80	44.06	27.72	6.93	1.49	0.00	0.00
	Housing low obstruction	litter	0.50	22.28	58.42	18.32	0.99	0.00	0.00	0.00
		detritus	3.22	27.23	48.51	19.31	3.47	1.49	0.00	0.00
	Industrial retail warehousing	litter	6.44	4.95	52.97	31.19	8.91	1.98	0.00	0.00
		detritus	6.19	13.86	40.10	36.63	6.44	2.97	0.00	0.00
	Main roads including multi-lanes and High speed roads	litter	1.98	5.94	59.9	31.19	1.98	0.50	0.50	0.00
		detritus	6.19	25.74	38.61	26.24	6.44	1.98	0.00	0.99
	Other highway	litter	12.38	9.41	44.55	26.73	13.86	4.95	0.00	0.50
		detritus	10.45	21.29	38.61	23.27	11.88	3.96	0.00	0.50
	Recreational hard and soft	litter	4.95	21.78	52.48	18.32	4.95	0.99	0.00	0.00
		detritus	3.24	27.72	13.86	9.41	1.49	0.99	0.00	0.00

NI 195 scores for litter are usually consistently within target (4.46% or below).

**Figure 5: NI 195 survey results**



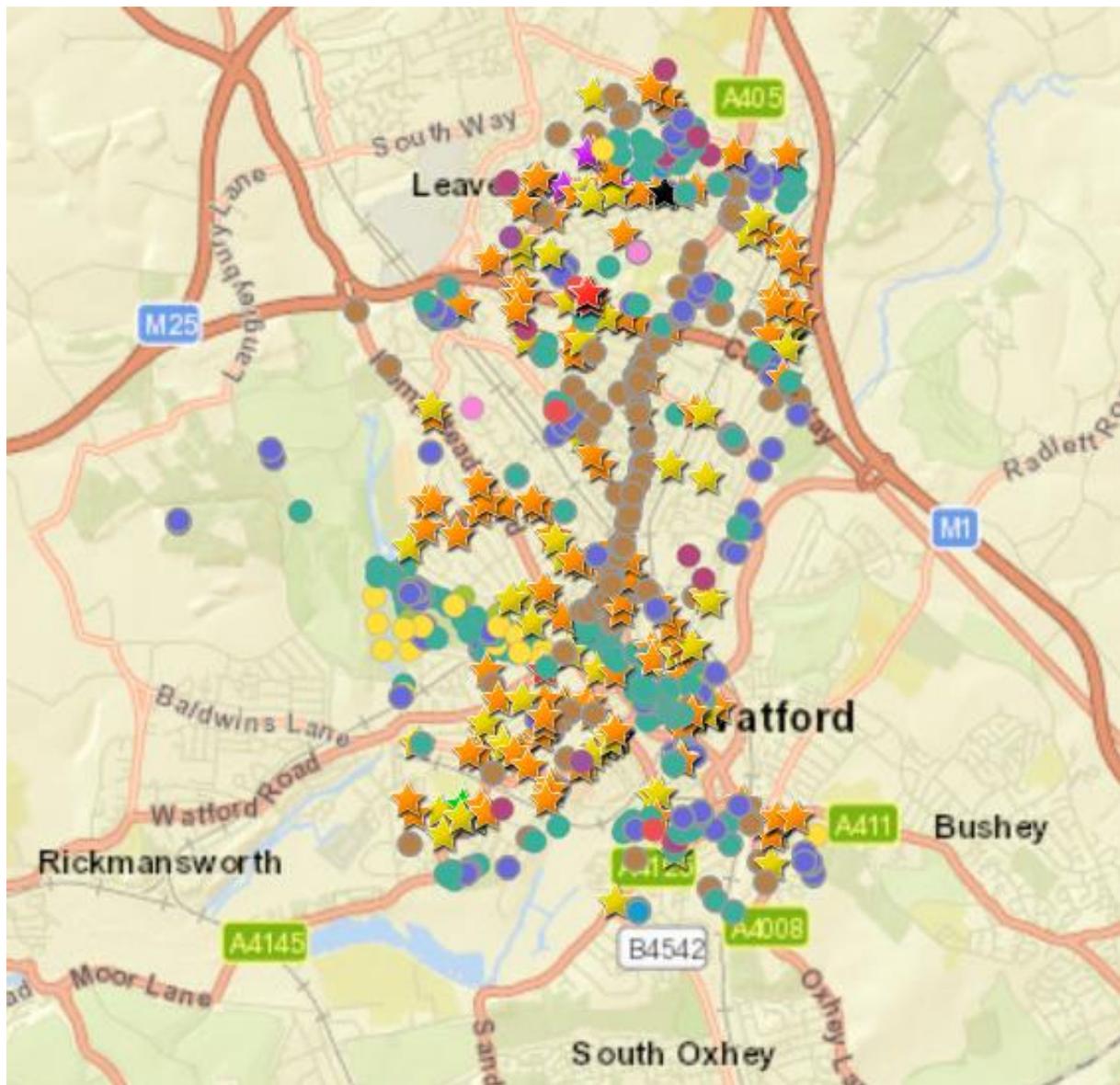
APSE have now also developed a survey for measuring environmental cleanliness, called the Land Audit Management System (LAMS). Results can be input using an app, and submitted to APSE for analysis and benchmarking against other local authorities. This option will be explored further to see if it is something that could work for Watford.

### 3. Binrastructure Optimisation

#### 3.1 Audit of existing assets

In order to understand current litter bin provision, an audit has been carried out of all litter bins across the borough. Each litter bin has been mapped on GIS with a record of location, manufacturer/type and condition of the bin along with a photo. This was last carried out in 2018 and recorded a total of 766 bins across the town - further updates are required.

**Figure 6: Litter bin audit 2018**



### 3.2 Identification of hotspots

Identifying hotspots is based on reports of where there are relatively high levels of litter in comparison to other areas. This may be litter dropped on the ground, or in litter bins. Litter may accumulate faster in some locations than the normal cleansing schedule for that type of land is able to keep up with.

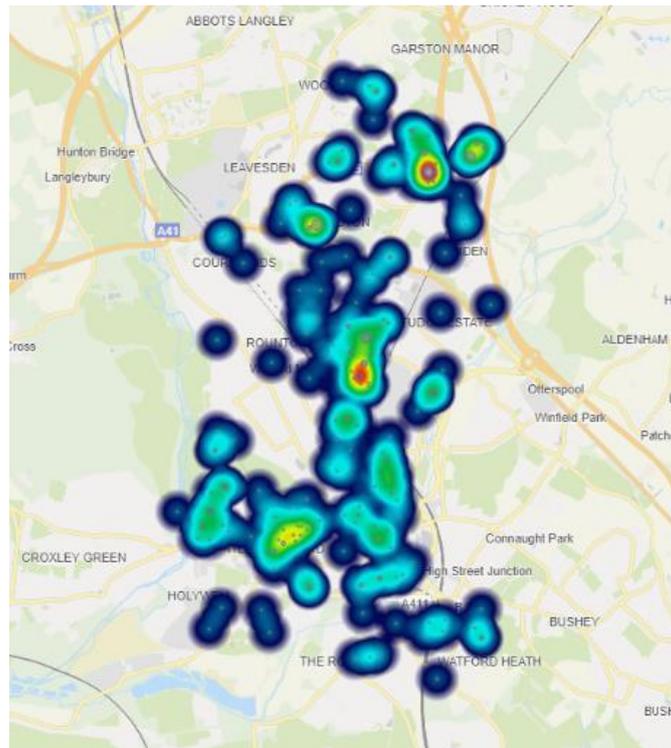
Hotspots may be high footfall areas, or places where litter is easily trapped. Littering often takes place in shared areas for which no one feels responsible, for example:

- Places where people congregate
- Places where people stop to do something
- Areas close to pubs, clubs, cafes and takeaways
- Transport hubs including bus stops
- Some commercial areas, car parks or unused land
- Near to schools and colleges
- Roads that connect these places to shops
- Around existing bins

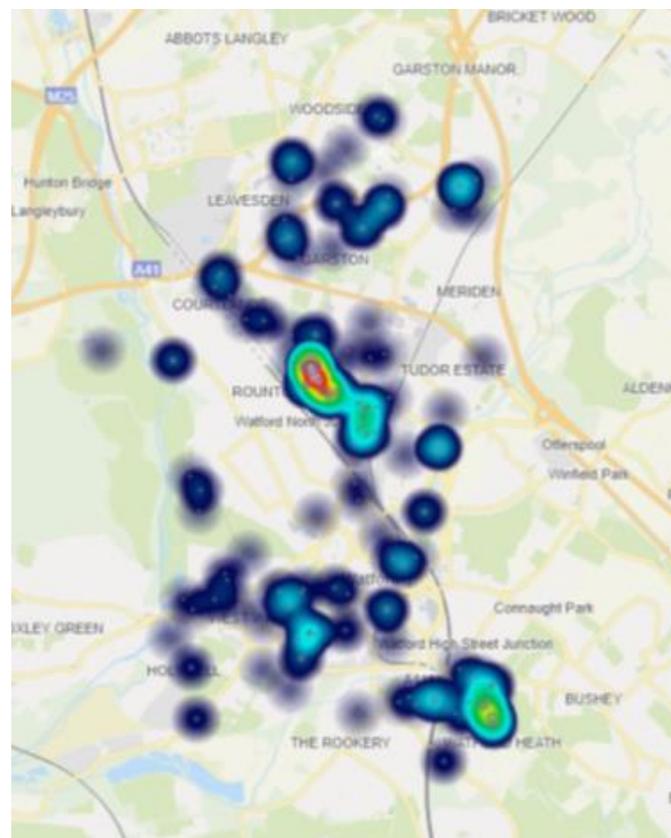
In Watford, particular focus should be on:

- Business areas and industrial estates e.g. town centre, shop fronts
- The busiest public open spaces e.g. Cassiobury Park, Oxhey Activity Park, Harwoods Adventure Playground
- Waterside land e.g. canals, rivers, wetlands
- Transport interchanges e.g. train stations, taxi ranks
- Temporary events

**Figure 7: Litter hotspots 2020/21 (based on reported issues)**



**Figure 8: Overflowing litter bin hotspots 2020/21 (based on reported issues)**



### 3.3 Determining whether current assets are meeting current needs

It is important to map hotspots so these can be compared against current litter bin locations and any adjustments made accordingly to avoid oversupply or undersupply.

**Figure 9: Things to consider to ensure suitable litter bin provision**

Litter hotspot?	At least one bin at the location	No bins at the location
Yes	<p><b>POSSIBLE UNDER-PROVISION</b> Consider whether ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of bins is inadequate</li> </ul> <p><b>POSSIBLE NEED FOR IMPROVEMENT</b> Consider whether ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Siting or type of bins is inappropriate</li> <li>• Visibility of bins needs to be improved</li> <li>• Condition of bins is contributing, e.g. are they dirty and is this off-putting</li> <li>• Signage or public information needs improvement</li> </ul>	<p><b>LIKELY UNDER-PROVISION</b> Consider whether ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of bins would help solve the problem, or whether there are other root causes (e.g. windblown litter, waste escaping from refuse collection vehicles during household waste collection)</li> </ul>
No	<p><b>LIKELY APPROPRIATE PROVISION</b> Consider whether ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lessons from this area could be transferred elsewhere</li> </ul> <p><b>POSSIBLE OVER-PROVISION</b> Consider whether ...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• provision might be too high e.g. could the bin be removed to save money, or would that result in dropped litter?</li> </ul>	<p><b>NO PROBLEM</b> Keep under review</p>

\* WRAP's *The Right Bin in the Right Place 2020*

Areas should be focussed on in order of priority, if resources are limited and to avoid over-provision or unnecessary ‘street clutter’.

**Figure 10: Priority assessment criteria**

High priority	<p><b>Areas of high intensity of use</b></p> <p>Areas which, through intense pedestrian and/or vehicular movements, are prone to fluctuations in litter and refuse and require both high levels of monitoring and frequent cleansing</p>
Medium priority	<p><b>Areas of medium intensity of use</b></p> <p>Areas affected by moderate levels of pedestrian and vehicular activity and therefore less prone to fluctuations in litter and refuse, usually situated outside centres of retail or commercial activity, but used regularly by members of the public</p>
Low priority	<p><b>Low intensity of use</b></p> <p>Areas subject to low or infrequent levels of pedestrian and vehicular activity and therefore less prone to fluctuations in litter and refuse, often located in more rural areas</p>
<p>It may be necessary to prioritise further, perhaps within the high priority areas, in which case local authorities and BIDs should define their own priorities based on local needs, for example:</p>	
Priority 1	<p>Town centre daytime and night-time economy areas</p> <p>Areas around fast food outlets</p> <p>Town centre public transport stops and taxi ranks</p> <p>Tourist attractions/heritage sites</p>
Priority 2	<p>Major gateways, for example school entrances and shopping precincts</p>
Priority 3	<p>Dog-walking routes</p> <p>Congregation points e.g. benches and seating areas</p>
Priority 4	<p>Local litter hotspots</p>
Priority 5	<p>Public or elected member requests where the problem has been acknowledged</p>

\* WRAP’s *The Right Bin in the Right Place 2020*

### 3.4 Improving understanding of the issues

In order to better understand why litter may be occurring, statistical analysis can be carried out using the information gathered during the bin audit (e.g. capacity) and mapping of hotspot locations. Visual observations could also be undertaken of the type litter being dropped, the distance from a bin and by who – however this would require additional resources. Feedback from enforcement officers may also highlight areas of concern.

### 3.5 Recycling on the Go

Watford has 10 'Recycling on the Go' bins in the town centre, and 3 in Cassiobury Park - 2 additional units are soon to be installed in Cassiobury Park as companion stations to smart general waste litter bins. The intention is to install recycling bins at all parks with cafés – including the new Oxhey Activity Park and Woodside Community Sports Village once the development is complete. The bins currently in use are Unicorn Urban double units (2 x 120 litre capacity), and each unit has one side for litter and one side for recycling.



It is commonly known across local authorities that recycling bins can be subject to misuse and contamination with non-recyclable materials. The following approaches could help deter contamination:

- Use consistent colour to denote bins of different types
- Provide clear signage of acceptable materials, and make sure it is not overpowered or obscured by any other signage, such as corporate branding
- Co-locate other bins, especially food waste and residual waste
- Ask operatives to remove large, visible items of contamination
- Use signage to explain what to do with liquids prior to deposit

In Watford, clear sacks are used to line the bins to enable operatives to assess the contents and determine the level of contamination. The litter side tends to be used more than the recycling side and therefore requires emptying more frequently. Sacks with more than 20% contamination are not considered of high enough quality to recycle. Unfortunately, contamination is an issue, and the main contaminants are coffee cups and various food packaging. New coffee cup stickers have been added to the bins with the aim of reducing contamination with this item, and monitoring will continue.



### 3.6 Consider bin removal

As well as introducing new bins to identified hotspots, removing unused or underused bins should also be considered for most effective use of assets and resources. Where bins are removed, the area will be kept under observation and the decision reviewed or cleansing frequency enhanced if litter increases to an unacceptable level.

Litter bin removal may also take place if the bin is very well-used and known to attract fly tipping. This has happened on some occasions in Watford, upon request from the Environmental Enforcement team.

### 3.7 Working in partnership

Stakeholders that may need to be considered in any decision around litter bin provision, and consulted about new installations or removals include:

- Operational staff
- Elected members
- Voluntary and community groups e.g. Resident associations, 'Friends of' parks
- Charities e.g. Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Green Gym
- 'Interest' based groups and other users e.g. dog walkers, sports clubs, park-runners, allotment tenants, workers, tourists
- Schools and other educational establishments
- Leaseholders e.g. cafes, sports clubs
- Business Improvement District (BID) or other local business associations e.g. Chamber of Commerce
- Other local authority departments e.g. enforcement, waste management, highways, planning, public health, transport
- Neighbouring local authorities
- Other statutory duty holders e.g. Canal & River Trust, Network Rail, Highways England
- Housing associations e.g. Watford Community Housing and Thrive Homes
- Utility companies
- Other significant local landowners including land for development
- Police

Litter issues on private land should be reported to the council's Community Protection department who have powers to serve a Litter Clearing Notice.

Commercial businesses, in particular providers of food and drink consumables, may wish to take some responsibility through providing litter bins outside of their premises or undertaking litter picking. McDonald's and Tesco have been known to participate in community litter picking events in Watford. This is positive for their reputation and brand, rather than being associated with being part of the problem.



The Hertfordshire Waste Partnership was formed in 1992 bringing together the 10 borough and district councils in their capacity as waste collection authorities and the county council as the waste disposal authority. The shared aim is for all households to reduce the amount of waste they produce, as well as reusing or recycling as much waste as possible.



This partnership is also made up of the 10 borough and district councils in Hertfordshire along with the county council, in order to share best practice, discuss common issues and goals, and collaborate on procedures, procurement and events.

### 3.8 Bin design

Based on the 2018 litter bin audit data, there are currently a total of 766 litter bins in use across the borough's streets and parks, which is made up of 22 different types, acquired over many years.

We are keen to standardise the types of litter bin used in the town, in order to achieve a more uniformed and consistent appearance of street furniture. This can also bring cost savings, de-clutter street scenes and make it easier and more efficient to empty, clean and repair bins. It also makes it easier for users to find a bin, and less likely that contamination will occur in 'Recycling on the Go' bins, as users are more likely to know what different bins look like and what goes in each type.

The current litter bins installed on streets are:

#### **Unicorn Urban 120 litre Strangford**

Town centre: Dark grey (RAL 7016 as per *Watford Town Centre – Streetscape Design Guide 2013*)

Elsewhere: Black



The current litter bins installed in parks are:

**Broxap Derby Standard 120 litre - black**



**Broxap Derby E Double 240 litre – black**



These bins have been in parks for approximately 10 years and experience issues of rusting due to dog urine. In 2021 the specification was upgraded to include a galvanised coating which is more resistant to corrosion in this way, along with the council logo.

Factors to consider when deciding on bin design:

- Siting requirements
  - Fixings
  - Permissions
  - Avoiding bins becoming hazards
  - Accessibility
- Apertures
- Colours – A suite of colours denoting different material types has been developed as part of the national Recycle Now brand and this is now widely used and recognised by the public



- Local environmental considerations
- Smart bins e.g. sensors, solar, Wi-Fi, USB
- Underground bins and vacuum systems
- Innovative bin options
- Commonly littered items e.g. coffee cups, chewing gum, cigarette butts, dog fouling

In Watford, we target some commonly littered items through innovative bin solutions, specific cleaning regimes and targeted campaigns:

### **Cigarette butts**

We have 2 ballot boxes for cigarette butts, to engage with members of the public and encourage disposal of these in a fun way, and any new litter bin purchases include integrated ash trays.

### **Chewing gum**

Each year a 'Spring Clean' is undertaken in the town centre which includes removal of chewing gum – in other areas this is carried out on a case by case basis.

### **Coffee cups**

Coffee cups are targeted through social media in order to encourage reusable cups instead and to minimise contamination of 'Recycling on the Go' bins – see section 4.2.

### **Dog fouling**

We have now phased out most of our dedicated dog waste bins as this is no longer considered hazardous waste, and encourage people to use general litter bins instead. A 'responsible dog ownership' campaign is currently being developed which is likely to include providing voluntary and community groups with posters and dog poo bags to give to park users, hosting an annual Pet Wise event, installing signage, and publicity including linking to national campaigns such as the Dogs Trust's "The Big Scoop".



We are also currently trialling use of bin sensors in 13 of our standard litter bins across streets and parks, which were installed to the bins in September 2019. The data is being monitored and if efficiencies and cost savings can be demonstrated, we may look to roll this out more widely in the future.

### 3.9 Litter in parks

Parks are subject to seasonal variations in litter levels, usually increasing over the summer months or during large events. There are also certain hotspot locations which experience higher levels of litter all year round. This includes cafés, play areas, skate parks, car parks and routes of high footfall. The pandemic has also seen a drastic increase in litter levels both seasonally and generally. In 2020/21, 137 tonnes of litter was generated in parks.

Littering is experienced across all of our green spaces but is most prevalent in Cassiobury Park, which is our largest park, covering approximately 250 hectares. In 2020/21, 77 tonnes of litter was disposed of from Cassiobury Park alone. Although operatives are based in the park each day emptying the existing litter bins at least daily, and up to three times per day during busy periods, it has remained a challenge at times to empty the bins fast enough. In order to manage litter here to an acceptable level in the summer of 2020, we spent circa £27,000 deploying additional operatives at weekends in order to keep on top the problem, compared with circa £14,000 in 2019. We also installed temporary open wire bins to capture some of the additional litter. As well as this, the Friends of Cassiobury Park carry out monthly litter picking events.

In 2021, Watford Borough Council were successful in being awarded £25,000 from WRAP's Litter Binrastructure Grant which will be used to purchase 'smart' compacting solar powered bins to tackle litter at hotspot locations in Watford's flagship park – Cassiobury Park. Some of these will be dual stations for recycling as well as general litter, as we are keen to increase recycling opportunities within the park, and raise awareness of the importance of doing so, and to increase the proportion of litter that is recycled. The smart bins will also be utilised for branding and to deliver anti-littering messages.

#### ***Litter in Cassiobury Park summer 2020***



Rubbish in our rivers is also a big issue in Watford. The River Gade runs through Cassiobury Park, and the River Colne runs through many of our other green spaces. We support Community Connection Projects CIC in carrying out regular river improvement activities across Watford which includes litter and fly tipping clearances from river banks and within the channel.



### 3.10 Street scene

The wider street scene environment should also be considered in any decision around litter bin locations and design, such as:

- Litter traps e.g. behind utility boxes, tree grills, planting, shredding
- Litter sinks e.g. over the fences of electricity sub-stations, over bridges onto railway embankments, or onto fenced off disused land.
- Design for easier cleaning and to reduce clutter
- Signage e.g. footprints

It is important that there is good communication between the department responsible for litter clearance and litter bin maintenance, and those responsible for street design and regeneration.

## 4. Education, Awareness and Enforcement

It is thought that littering behaviour may occur due to a real or perceived lack of bins, litter on the ground encouraging more to be dropped, and littering rates increasing with distance from a bin. In order to change, litterers need to both understand what they ought to be doing and be motivated to do the right thing. Any strategy and changes to bin infrastructure need to be communicated to the affected stakeholders – see section 3.7.

### 4.1 Working with schools

Veolia regularly delivers school classroom talks and assemblies about waste, recycling and litter. In 2019/2020 Veolia delivered 35 school sessions, with 3,995 children educated. As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, Veolia have developed a series of e-learning packages for KS2 students which include the topic of litter. There is also a secondary school programme called ECO Leaders, which seeks to create proactive student-led group projects focused on the theme of sustainability, to improve the school and local communities' overall environmental performance.

A school e-newsletter is circulated twice per year covering a wide range of topics including litter picking events, seasonal messages, how to achieve Eco School status and sustainability.



Competitions are also run to tackle litter issues, for example to design high impact posters to display at hotspot locations in streets and parks to deter littering behaviour.





For World Oceans Day in June 2020, Veolia asked schools to take part in creating a masterpiece that encourages people to protect and preserve our oceans by recycling more, and ensuring all waste ends up in our bins, not our seas. The artwork could be a drawing, a sculpture, or a painting, but it must be made out of recyclable materials (so it can be recycled when finished with it). The winning design by Nascot Wood Junior School was celebrated and featured on Veolia's and Watford Council's social media channels.

## 4.2 Roadshows

Veolia aim to attend at least 4 community events per year. This usually includes the annual Allotment Forum and Family Fun Days in parks among others. Providing information around litter is particularly important as it is a big problem at such locations.



### 4.3 Reducing single-use plastics

It is estimated that of the 400 million tonnes of plastic produced each year, 40% of that is single-use. Approximately 12 million tonnes of plastic is dumped in the sea each year, as well as littering streets, parks and water courses.

Watford's Waste and Recycling service in line with the council's *Sustainability Strategy* aims to reduce plastic waste through:

- Working towards becoming a single-use Plastic Free council. This involves auditing our use and replacing with sustainable alternatives wherever possible, and to expect the same from partner organisations. This includes coffee cups, plastic cups, straws and stirrers. These have already been completely eliminated from the Town Hall.
- Introducing a scheme by which businesses are encouraged and rewarded for reducing single-use plastics – targeting takeaway premises
- Working with Watford BID to promote the national Refill campaign and encourage local bars, cafés and restaurants to sign up to the scheme. The mission is to help both visitors and residents reduce plastic pollution by allowing everyone access to free drinking water in reusable bottles instead of buying single-use plastic. Numerous council buildings have registered as Refill stations.
- Promote WasteAware's 'Remember Your Reusables' campaign



#### 4.4 Social media

Watford Borough Council has a strong social media presence which is supported by Veolia. This platform is often used to raise awareness of key environmental messages for people to learn, engage and share across their own networks. Veolia provides the council's Communications team with an annual social media planner addressing key issues and national campaigns, and this is added to as required throughout the year.

In 2020, we published a total of 27 posts with litter themes, which had 2481 likes, 1005 shares and 149 comments. Members of public may be persuaded to take litter home with them, or switch to reusable items such as water bottles and coffee cups.

It is important to convey Watford's own messages to target local issues, along with supporting county-wide messages in partnership with WasteAware, as well as Keep Britain Tidy's national campaigns so that consistent messages are delivered across the country in line with the *Litter Strategy for England*.



## 4.5 Enforcement

The council's Community Protection department are responsible for enforcing environmental crimes such as littering, which includes dog fouling. In Watford, anyone caught littering will be issued with a Fixed Penalty Notice of £75. For dog fouling it's £50. Failure to pay an FPN could result in a prosecution for the offence.

There is a Town Enforcement Officer dedicated to patrolling the town centre, and other hotspot areas in the borough, engaging with members of the public and issuing fines as required – most commonly for cigarette litter. Bird feeding (which can be classified as littering) is also a prevalent issue in the town centre, particularly at St Mary's Churchyard and the pond, this is dealt with through displaying signage and talking to people observed doing this. We may consider action for persistent offenders. Illegal flyer distribution is also tackled, as these are a major cause of litter.

The team carry out proactive and reactive 'Duty of Care' inspections at businesses to ensure they have a suitable waste collection service and that their waste is secure and contained. Information and advice is given on their 'Duty of Care' and on the waste hierarchy for reuse, then recycling, then recovery of waste, such as packaging. Food businesses are also given advice on waste produced by their customers. Formal action is only taken against those businesses that continue to fail in their 'Duty of Care'.

Incidents of littering and dog fouling can be reported at [www.watford.gov.uk/report-it](http://www.watford.gov.uk/report-it) both for clearance and to report the person or business responsible if any identification details are known such as name, address or vehicle.

## 5. Voluntary and Community Groups

Watford has a network of amazing volunteers who contribute their time and energy to help maintain the borough's public spaces so that they are wonderful places for everyone to visit and enjoy.

### 5.1 'Friends of' and other resident groups

There are a number of active local resident groups that help look after Watford's green spaces, and represent the interests of park users, as listed below:

- Friends of Cassiobury Park
- Friends of Oxhey Park
- Friends of Harebreaks Wood
- Friends of Woodside Playing Fields
- Oxhey Village Environment Group (OVEG)
- Courtlands Residents Association (Goodwood Recreation Ground)
- Ridge Residents Association (Orchard Park)
- Watford Fields Residents Association



'Friends of' and other resident groups preserve and enhance the natural environment in many ways, which includes carrying out regular litter picking activities and reporting of issues. Their contributions are invaluable and they are true assets to local communities.

### 5.2 Green Gym

Green Gyms are run by The Conservations Volunteers (TCV), a charity that supports communities to improve their local area and tackle issues that matter to them, which includes creating, protecting and enhancing green spaces, as well as developing new skills and improving health and wellbeing.

Although Green Gyms focus on practical conservation activities incorporating health and fitness, the groups do also carry out some litter picking activities as part of their sessions.

In Watford, there are two Green Gyms in place – one at Cassiobury Park which meets weekly, and another that meets twice per week covering multiple parks including Knutsford Playing Fields, Radlett Road Playing Fields, Waterfields Recreation Ground and Garston Park.



### 5.3 Supporting community clean up events

Watford Borough Council and Veolia are proactive in working with voluntary and community groups to carry out litter picking events. Special kits are available to borrow free or charge, in order to help people keep their local environments clean and tidy. Kits contain litter pickers, protective gloves, high visibility vests and separate coloured bags for non-recyclable litter and recyclable litter such as plastic bottles and cans. A risk assessment is a requirement before any event is carried out, and Veolia will then collect and dispose of any rubbish from an agreed location. In order to increase the amount of waste recycled in the town, plastic bottles and cans can be separated in clear sacks.

Watford has been particularly proactive in its support of Keep Britain Tidy's campaign *The Great British Spring Clean*.

Great British September Clean 11 to 27 September 2020	Great British Spring Clean 28 May to 13 June 2021
Over 70 participants (groups sizes were limited to a maximum of 6 with social distancing measures in place due to the pandemic)	Over 250 participants from 16 groups - businesses, schools, community groups and individuals
100 bags of litter were collected, 25% of which was recycled	150 bags of litter and 40 bags of recycling collected



## 5.4 Funding



Veolia's Sustainability Fund will provide cash sponsorship, in-kind resources or staff volunteers to support not-for-profit organisations and community groups to transform their local community or environment (standard pledge amount is a maximum of £1000).

A successful project will provide evidence of one or more of the following:

- Enhancing biodiversity
- Promoting sustainable waste behaviours (reduce, reuse and/or recycle)
- Protecting or preserving resources and the environment
- Its use of recycled, reused or reclaimed materials

Previously named Veolia's Recycling Fund for Communities, projects that have benefitted from this funding in Watford include:

### **Watford Education Project Sustainability Award**

Support a Sustainability Award for students taking part in the Young Enterprise Company Programme. Students design a product that will reduce the amount of plastic waste on land and in the sea. They set up a business and then sell this product to the general public.

Awarded: £600

### **Pastoral Gardens at Beechfield Primary School**

Creating a sensory play area made from recycled items allowing children and families space to explore the natural environment.

Awarded: £1,000

Veolia also offers another funding scheme specific to Watford, known as Friends in Green Spaces.

## **Veolia FIGS (Friends in Green Spaces)**



Watford is blessed with a network of amazing volunteers who contribute their time and energy to help maintain the town's parks and green spaces so that they are wonderful places for everyone to visit and enjoy. Veolia's Park Rangers already link up with many of you through the Friends Of groups and clean-ups but we want to do more to support everyone volunteering in our green spaces and promote the work you're doing.

### How can we help you?

- We can arrange for the collection of rubbish after clear-ups.
- We can lend community clean-up kits and tools.
- We can offer support and advice.
- We can arrange for the use of meeting spaces at the new Cassiobury Hub and at Cheslyn House.
- We'd be particularly keen to assist anyone wanting to establish a new *Friends Of* group in any parks not already represented.



We also have a small fund of £1500 to help with your projects in parks and we'd welcome any bids now for an allocation of this. We're not specifying a limit but we'd like to spread it around the borough as much as possible. You could use this money for tools, bulbs, tree whips, supplies or specific projects or even to maintain your team's critical tea and biscuits supplies. To apply for funds or help with any of the above simply fill in the attached form and return it by email or to one of us directly.

## 6. Monitoring and Evaluation

### 6.1 Strategic aims

The Litter Strategy for Watford has the following aims, in line with the aims of the Street Cleansing, Parks and Open Spaces services:

- To maintain the current baseline cleansing standards across the borough overall and by individual land uses
- To ensure standards of cleanliness and the requirements of the contract are continuously monitored in order to proactively apply the *Zonal Performance and rectification timescales*, to ensure standards of cleanliness and public satisfaction are maintained
- To ensure the gateways into the borough impart a positive image of Watford in being maintained to the required performance standards
- To achieve the overarching strategic objectives of the council's Green Spaces Strategy
- To deliver a high quality service to the residents of Watford maintaining or improving on the current customer satisfaction rate of 78% for Street Cleansing service and 96% for the Parks and Open Spaces service

In addition to this:

- To maintain land so it is predominantly free of litter except for some small items, in the most cost/resource efficient way
- To maximise recovery of recyclable materials from waste disposed of on-the-go
- To support and encourage behaviour change such as waste reduction/reuse/recycling, and appropriate disposal through use of litter bins or taking rubbish home.

Any objectives created in relation to these aims or new intervention methods would need to be measurable as either absolute, relative or a direction of travel, depending on monitoring data available.

### 6.2 Measuring achievement of aims

There are already numerous monitoring practices in place which help measure the amount of litter on the ground and collected from bins, which will continue:

- Recording the tonnages of street cleansing waste taken for disposal, and waste collected from parks
- Carrying out quarterly surveys of environmental cleanliness – currently using NI 195 methodology
- Logging of enquiries and complaints
- Monitoring quantity and quality of materials in 'Recycling on the Go' bins
- Recording the number of individuals engaged with through school and community outreach, social media
- Staff observations and feedback
- Contractor schedules

Ideally, monitoring is needed before, during and after any interventions, in order to measure effectiveness. Data is most reliable when collected at frequent intervals over an extended time period.

### 6.3 Constraints to achieving aims

- A limited number of surveys are carried out to assess levels of litter, and location varies each time making it difficult to determine changes at a particular site
- Street cleansing tonnages recorded do not only include litter but other materials such as detritus and leaves during leaf fall season
- Lack of resources to introduce new monitoring methods

## 7. Action Plan

Ref	Action	Owner	Timescale / Frequency
<b>Watford's Street Cleansing, Parks and Open Spaces Services</b>			
1	Liaise with Hertfordshire County Council and their contractors to find out their grass cutting programme along high speed road verges. These must be litter picked in advance to prevent litter being shredded and spread by the grass cutting machinery. The area must also be checked after grass cutting and litter picked to Grade B+.	Veolia	Annual (February to October)
2	Adopt a proactive approach to referring litter issues on private land to the relevant land owner or statutory duty holder, such as Watford Community Housing, Hertfordshire County Council, Network Rail, Canal & River Trust. Customers should also be correctly signposted to report issues to the appropriate organisation.	WBC Veolia	Ongoing
3	Review cleansing standards/zones and identify changes in land use to ensure the optimum overall cleansing service is provided	Veolia	Annual
4	Review/update street cleansing schedules on GIS	Veolia	Annual or as changes are made
5	Use a dedicated Green Flag team to ensure Grade A standards across all Green Flag parks	Veolia	Ongoing
6	Ensure that litter bins are cleaned regularly to avoid deterring use	Veolia	Weekly in Zone 1a, annually elsewhere
<b>Binrastructure Optimisation</b>			
7	Carry out a regular litter bin audit / review of audit data to ensure records are up to date	Veolia	Annual or as changes are made
8	Consider innovative bin solutions in parks and streets litter hotspots	WBC Veolia	Ongoing
9	Install smart bins in Cassiobury Park, using £25,000 WRAP Litter Binrastructure Grant funding	WBC Veolia	September 2021
10	Install 'Recycling on the Go' bins at Oxhey Activity Park and Woodside Community Sports Village	WBC Veolia	2021 onwards
11	Review binrastructure provision in line with changes in legislation and any introduction of a Deposit Return Scheme	WBC Veolia	TBC
12	Assess each request for a new litter bin based on the guidance in <i>Figure 9: Priority assessment criteria</i> . Use monitoring tools to assess need and review use of any new bins installed.	WBC Veolia	Ongoing
13	Ensure that all new litter bins have ashtrays, and look into solutions for existing bins which do not currently have ashtrays, especially in high footfall areas	WBC Veolia	Ongoing

Education, Awareness and Enforcement			
14	Promote the council's online reporting form for parks and streets issues <a href="http://www.watford.gov.uk/report-it">www.watford.gov.uk/report-it</a> to increase the number of reports for more accurate identification of priority areas	WBC Veolia	Ongoing
15	Promote community clean up events through social media, direct mailings to schools/community groups/businesses and press releases. Encourage these in areas most in need to improve NI 195 scores. Arrange a minimum of 2 litter picks per year. Measure success through increased participation, impressions from social media posts, amount of rubbish collected.	WBC Veolia	Annual (January to March)
16	Aim for participation from at least one business, school and community group in the Great British Spring Clean	Veolia	Annual (March)
17	Provide clear bags for plastic bottles and cans recycling during community clean up events	Veolia	Ongoing
18	Deliver waste and recycling/litter awareness talks to two schools per term which may include classroom or assembly and receive an average satisfaction rating of 4.5 out of 5. Measure success through number of schools participating, number of residents engaged with, school feedback form.	Veolia	Ongoing
19	Produce a bi-yearly digital newsletter to all primary schools to keep schools informed about talks, litter pick events, Eco Schools and sustainability. Measure success through increased school talks, more interest in FIGS/Sustainability Fund.	Veolia	Bi-annual (June and October)
20	Deliver a minimum of 4 pop up roadshows/public events per year	Veolia	Annual
21	Promote Veolia's FIGS/Recycling Fund for Communities via About Watford magazine, social media posts, school newsletter, flyers at roadshows, posters on park noticeboards. Measure success through number of applications, number successfully awarded.	WBC Veolia	Ongoing
22	Veolia to produce an annual social media planner to share positive new stories generated from campaign work engagement, call to action and raise awareness to create environmental behavioural change. To use on council Facebook, Instagram, Twitter. Measure success by number of impressions and engagement.	WBC Veolia	Annual (March)
23	Promote WasteAware's 'Remember Your Reusables' campaign and the national Refill initiative to businesses and members of public. The aim is to maximise the number of food/drink establishments supporting the Refill campaign and displaying a poster in their shop window to inform people they can refill their reusable bottle in their premises. Promote on social media and tag Watford BID to repost. Measure success through number of establishments signing up.	WBC Veolia	Ongoing

24	Develop and deliver a 'responsible dog ownership' campaign to tackle dog fouling, to include distribution of dog poo bags, events, signage and publicity	WBC Veolia	2021-2023
25	Target campaigns and consider adapting bininfrastructure towards commonly litter items such as coffee cups, chewing gum, cigarette butts and dog fouling.	WBC Veolia	Ongoing
26	Install posters or stickers on/near litter bins which are heavily used to encourage people to take their litter home or report an overflowing bin	WBC Veolia	Ongoing
<b>Monitoring and Evaluation</b>			
27	Continue NI 195 surveys of environmental cleanliness	WBC Veolia	Quarterly
28	Explore option of using APSE's Land Audit Management System (LAMS) to survey environmental cleanliness	WBC Veolia	2022/23
29	Feedback from operatives on quantity and quality of materials collected from 'Recycling on the Go' bins in the town centre and Cassiobury Park	Veolia	Weekly
30	Create regular litter hotspot maps	WBC Veolia	Quarterly and annually
31	Share data and successes/lessons learned across local authority networks such as the Hertfordshire Waste Partnership and ParksHerts, other Veolia contracts, and publishing nationally	WBC Veolia	Ongoing
32	Regularly review delivery of the strategy at contract meetings, report progress to Leadership Board annually and record updates on the Action Plan as an appendix	WBC Veolia	Annually

Part A

**Report to:** Cabinet

**Date of meeting:** Monday, 4 October 2021

**Report author:** Contract Manager - Parks and Streetcare,  
Temporary Parks Project Manager

**Title:** Rediscovering the River Colne Programme 2021-2031

**Nature of Report:** Key Decision

## 1.0 Summary

1.1 This report recommends the approval in principle of a 10 year programme and proposals to restore the River Colne, a key feature of Watford's landscape, to improve water quality, biodiversity, access and engagement and ultimately wellbeing for all.

1.2 The report sets out the proposals for the first three years of the programme.

1.3 To develop the proposals, supporting programme and action plan, significant work has been undertaken for the Council by Groundwork a national network of environmental charities working to change places and change lives. They also host ColneCAN (The River Colne Catchment Action Network) caring for the whole catchment area of the River Colne. This work has included engagement with a range of stakeholders and partners since 2019, including a public consultation in 2019.

1.4 This programme contributes to a number of the council's strategies, priorities and commitments as listed below;

- The Mayor's Manifesto 2018 -2022
- Watford Together Delivery Plan 2020-2024 – A Healthy, Happy Town 2020-2024
- Sustainability Strategy 2020 -2023
- Watford Riverwell Regeneration Project 2015-2035

1.5 The programme will deliver four work streams designed to improve the river, access to it, and a number of engagement activities with the public to promote use and understanding of the river and the environment;

Work stream 1: Environmental Improvement

Work stream 2: Landscape and Access Improvement

Work stream 3: Environmental Monitoring

Work stream 4: Engagement

- 1.6 The 10 year programme has a total estimated cost of £2.8M. The first three years of the programme are estimated to cost just over £1.2M. The council has committed capital funding of £750,000 between 2021 and 2024 with the remaining funding for that period coming from stakeholders and external funders. £124,925 has already been obtained and the remaining match funding of £335,301 is being sought to cover the full cost via a fundraising strategy and applications to various organisations. Any shortfall will see works prioritised to derive the optimum benefit for the funding within the four work streams.
- 1.7 Groundwork South and Groundwork East have been appointed under two procurement exemptions to manage the delivery phase of this programme from 2021-2022. These appointments include managing works, community engagement and fundraising. Watford is covered by Groundwork East which has partnered the council many times and is working on the engagement elements of the Rediscovering the River Colne programme. The wider Colne Catchment Action Network is hosted by Groundwork South which has greater in-river experience and is therefore leading on this element.
- 1.8 A procurement exercise will be conducted for the works to be carried out from 2022 - 2024
- 1.9 There is a strong environmental and social case for the programme as it will improve the environment, enable access to the river and deliver a number of engagement activities for the public to connect with their environment.

## 2.0 Risks

2.1

<b>Nature of risk</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Suggested Control Measures</b>	<b>Response</b> (treat, tolerate, terminate or transfer)	<b>Risk Rating</b> (combination of severity and likelihood)
Strategic programme partners change or withdraw from programme	Programme delayed or stopped	Effective governance, commissioning and partnership agreements	Treat	2x 3 = 6

A suitable specialist provider is not procured to develop the strategy and deliver the project	Insufficient expertise to deliver the programme to a high standard and achieve desired outcomes	Groundwork South and Groundwork East appointed as delivery partners to date. A robust procurement exercise will be undertaken for works from 2022	Treat	2 x 3 = 6
Key programme delivery partners do not have the capacity to support and implement the different stages of the project	The programme is not delivered to its full potential	Ensure effective project management to identify clear work streams for each delivery partner and agree realistic commitments in advance. Effective governance and commissioning of services	Treat	2 x 2 = 4
There is a lack of financial resource to deliver the programme	The programme is not delivered to its full potential	Obtain cost estimates, identify external funding opportunities and delivery of the programme is phased over a number of years. Fundraising strategy included as part of the programme. Prioritisation process to deliver optimum benefit for available funding	Treat	3 x 2 = 6
National Legislation or policy change in relation to Water Framework Directive and achievement	Higher or lower standards and targets for water quality may be imposed or timescales for compliance may be changed impacting	Currently nothing has been raised and national policy and legislation is moving in a direction to support nature recovery. Effective programme	Treat	2 x 1 = 2

of 'Good' water quality status over the 10 year lifecycle	on proposals and delivery timescales	governance and monitoring		
Stakeholders will not be fully engaged, cooperative or supportive	A strategy that does not reflect stakeholder views, requirements and expectations	Ensure thorough and extensive stakeholder engagement, identifying and contacting these early in the programme development and throughout programme lifecycle. Effective governance	Treat	2 x 2 = 4
Physical works not able to be carried out on site due to technical constraints	The programme is not delivered to its full potential	Effective governance, programme management and collaboration with key partners. Permitting process to be followed with Environment Agency	Treat	2 x 3 = 6
Programme and staff continuity	Disrupted delivery, change in programme, funding availability and political support	Effective governance and monitoring. Effective documentation management to ensure continuity.	Treat	2 x 2 = 4
Climate change event during programme	Disrupts delivery, additional cost, changes planned works, damage to completed works	Proposals to be developed with Environment Agency. Monitoring of weather/climate change and impacts on river and surroundings throughout programme	Treat	1 x 4 = 4

Risks will be managed as part of the programmes governance regularly reviewing the programme risk register

### 3.0 **Recommendations**

- 3.1 That Cabinet approves in principle the proposals for 'Rediscovering the River Colne 2021 – 2031 as detailed in section 4.4 and appendices 2, 3, 3a, 3b, 3c, and 3d.
- 3.2 That Cabinet approves the proposals for the programme for 2021 – 2024 as set out in this report.
- 3.3 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Head of Community & Environmental Services, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability to agree priorities within the proposed work streams and funding of the programme.
- 3.4 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Head of Community & Environmental Services to finalise the terms of the contracts with Groundwork East and South for the delivery phase of the programme 2021/22.
- 3.5 That Cabinet notes the procurement exemption to appoint Groundwork East (Appendix 5) for the delivery phase of the programme 2021-2022
- 3.6 That Cabinet delegates authority to the Head of Community & Environmental Services to undertake a procurement exercise to secure a delivery partner to carry out works under the programme in the financial years 2022/23 and 2023/24; to award the contract to the successful bidder and to finalise the terms of the contract.

#### **Further information:**

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#### **Report approved by: Donna Nolan, Managing Director**

### 4.0 **Detailed proposal**

#### 4.1 **Background**

- 4.1.1 The River Colne is one of two main rivers in Watford, and covers the largest geographical area of the two. It enters the borough in the East (Meriden ward) near Topgolf and leaves the borough in the South (Holywell ward) near the Lairage Land Local Nature Reserve. It passes through a number of parks and open spaces including Knutsford Playing Fields, Radlett Road Playing Fields, Timberlake Allotments, Waterfields Recreation Ground, Oxhey Park, Riverside Recreation

Ground, and Riverside Park. It also passes through the major regeneration area called Watford Riverwell, and numerous retail and industrial areas.

- 4.1.2 There is a perception that the River Colne is in many parts dirty, inaccessible, unkempt and of low wildlife value. In reality this is not always the case and in some areas such as Oxhey Park it adds value to the local amenity. However, it is a natural asset that is largely overlooked and ignored by the local community.
- 4.1.3 By virtue of The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) regulations 2017 the UK government has a target to achieve 'Good Ecological Status' for all water bodies by 2027. This duty is delivered through the Environment Agency and a 'Catchment Based Approach' which requires collaboration between and with a number of stakeholders alongside its regulatory function to meet this target. Currently the River Colne in Watford has 'Moderate' status due to a number of factors impacting on the river such as manmade modifications, pollution, invasive species and adjoining habitat quality.
- 4.1.4 The River Colne is part of the River Thames basin and has a catchment area in the region stretching from Chesham in the West to Potters Bar in the East and Harpenden in the North to the River Thames in the South. A catchment area is defined as a geographic area defined naturally by surface water hydrology rather than by administrative or site boundaries. The catchment area of the River Colne is overseen by the Colne Catchment Action Network (ColneCAN), hosted by Groundwork, which brings together a wide range of partners to protect and improve the whole river catchment area.
- 4.1.5 In recognition of the issues affecting the river, its potential and benefit to the borough, the council committed to developing proposals to improve the River Colne through a number of strategies as detailed in 4.2. In 2019, the council approved £150,000 of funding and Groundwork were appointed to develop proposals for the River Colne.
- 4.1.6 The programme was officially launched in September 2019, there is a dedicated micro website for programme information and updates at [www.rivercolnewatford.co.uk](http://www.rivercolnewatford.co.uk) and it has also been promoted on the council website, social media and in the Watford Observer.
- 4.1.7 Stage 1 of the programme has now been completed by Groundwork which involved public and stakeholder engagement, undertaking surveys, detailed reports, cost estimates, and developing proposals and action plans.

4.1.8 This report details proposals to improve the River Colne, access to it and to mobilise and engage the community in using and caring for the river.

## **4.2 Strategic Alignment**

4.2.1 The proposals to improve the river support the following strategies and commitments by the Council:

- The Mayors Manifesto 2018 -2022 themes of ‘Protecting our Local Environment’ and ‘A Sustainable Town’
- Watford Together Delivery Plan 2020-2024 theme of ‘A Healthy, Happy Town’ and action to ‘Revitalise the River Colne’
- Sustainability Strategy 2020 -2023 action of ‘Nature Restoration’
- Watford Riverwell Regeneration Project 2015-2035 – care for the river and integration to the development forms part of the overall masterplan.

4.2.2 It is also complementary to a number of other strategies of the council such as the Green Spaces Strategy (2013-2023) and Sports Facilities Strategy (2015-2025) which focus on green spaces next to the river, and green infrastructure elements of the council’s proposed Local Plan. In terms of the national government priorities, it supports the green recovery agenda.

4.2.3 The council’s Infrastructure Delivery Plan (IDP), identifies eligible spending priorities for the Community Infrastructure Levy. The ‘Colne Valley Linear Park’ is listed as one of the IDP strategic initiatives we are implementing to bring forward accessible green space to cater for the growth in Watford. Improving the river corridor and access to it can address the implications of growth especially in or adjacent to strategic development areas such as Watford Riverwell and the Colne Valley Sustainable Development Area. Its successful implementation will support current and future residents to access an improved environment. This priority also stems from our green infrastructure delivery programme.

## **4.3 Consultation and stakeholder engagement**

4.3.1 A public consultation (Appendix 1) was undertaken in 2019, with 131 respondents. The key summary responses are set out below:

- 76% wanting less litter and fly tipping
- 75% wanting habitats improved
- 67% wanting better access to the river
- 63% wanting better publicity
- 62% wanting better water quality
- 62% wanting improved views

4.3.2 A range of key stakeholders were also consulted on how to improve the river, this included; Environment Agency, Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative Forum, Community Connection Projects CIC, Green Gym, Affinity Water, Thames Water and Veolia.

4.3.3 Further consultation and engagement will take place as the programme progresses and designs are developed and finalised. Stakeholders will include councillors, friends groups, residents associations, housing associations/managing agents, health organisations, schools, businesses and riparian landowners.

#### 4.4 The proposed programme

4.4.1 Following the stakeholder engagement and a range of technical surveys and studies Groundwork have been able to develop a proposed programme for improving the River Colne. Appendix 2 summarises the work completed and proposed work streams. The proposed programme consists of four main work streams, summarised below in Table 1. Concept plans of the proposed physical improvements are shown in Appendix 3. Appendix 3a is the Landscape Strategy and Access Improvement proposals report. Appendix 3b is a visual interpretation of some of the proposed landscape and access improvements. Appendix 3c is the feasibility study detailing proposals for Environmental Monitoring. Appendix 3d is the report detailing proposals for community engagement.

4.4.2 For each work stream actions have been identified for the first three years (2021-2024) designed to meet the available funding and supporting funding strategy.

Table 1: Summary of proposed work streams

<b>Work stream 1 – Environmental Improvement</b>	
<b>Stage 1: Programme development</b>	Habitat improvement plans have been produced for 8 sites (Knutsford Playing Fields, Radlett Road Playing Fields, Timberlake Allotments, Waterfields Recreation Ground, Oxhey Park, Riverside Recreation Ground, Riverside Park, and Lairage Land Local Nature Reserve). These are based on geomorphological surveys, aquatic invertebrate surveys (river flies), botanical surveys, bat surveys, water vole and otter surveys, and an environmental record search. The plans identify improvements required and how these will be monitored over time.
<b>Overall outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved functioning river and adjacent habitat management</li> <li>• Improved biodiversity including thriving water vole population</li> <li>• Supporting the Environment Agency’s approach to reducing flood risk.</li> <li>• Removal of invasive non-native species</li> <li>• Reduced pollution</li> </ul>

<b>First 3 years</b>	Delivery of the habitat improvement plans for the <u>river and adjacent habitats</u> for Knutsford Playing Fields, Timberlake Allotments, Radlett Road Playing fields and Waterfields Recreation Ground
<b>Work stream 2 – Landscape and Access Improvements</b>	
<b>Stage 1: Programme development</b>	A landscape masterplan has been produced and identified opportunities to improve access, connectivity to surrounding areas and interpretation e.g. signage, nature trails, sculptures, steps. This will have benefits for sustainable travel, public health, education and awareness, and general aesthetics of the river corridor.
<b>Overall outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible river corridor</li> <li>• Improved river signage</li> <li>• Creation of destination areas</li> <li>• Creation of a heritage themed walk</li> <li>• Potential new river crossing</li> </ul>
<b>First 3 years</b>	Signage of the whole length of the river, improving accessibility and way-marking.
<b>Work stream 3 – Environmental Monitoring</b>	
<b>Stage 1: Programme development</b>	A plan has been produced detailing monthly monitoring that will be carried out by stakeholders and the local community through river fly surveys, outfall safari, pollution (phosphates and nitrates), geomorphological surveys, invasive species and fish populations.
<b>Overall outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of a Citizen Science Network</li> <li>• User led monitoring activity programme</li> <li>• Increased volunteering opportunities</li> <li>• New early warning for pollution incidents, water levels and invasive species</li> </ul>
<b>First 3 years</b>	Carry out monitoring activities including riverfly surveys, outfall 'safari', pollution (phosphates and nitrates), geomorphological surveys, invasive species and fish population. Hosting a Watford Water Quality Forum. Extension of the citizen science network. Producing the annual water quality report
<b>Work stream 4 – Engagement</b>	
<b>Stage 1: Programme development</b>	A plan has been produced in order to involve the community in each element of the programme including monitoring opportunities, volunteer days, activities and events, regular communication, education and awareness.

<b>Overall outcomes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased volunteering opportunities</li> <li>• Involvement of a wider range of the Watford community</li> <li>• Improved opportunities for health and wellbeing of residents</li> <li>• New education programmes and materials for schools</li> <li>• New arts and heritage programme</li> </ul>
<b>First 3 years</b>	Creation of a full time post (to support work streams 3 and 4), delivering an activity programme including a River Festival, and reaching out to the wider community.

## 4.5 Benefits

4.5.1 This programme has a range of benefits through improving the environment and people’s wellbeing. The key benefits that have been identified are as follows:

- An improved town centre with a beautiful, healthy and bio-diverse river and riverside at its centre
- A river and adjoining habitats that are in positive conservation management
- Reduced pollution
- Further promotion and engagement with accessible recreation spaces that encourage people to get outdoors and active, to improve their health and wellbeing, and to value their natural environment.
- Increased understanding among young people, residents and businesses in Watford about what they can do to support and protect their river and the wider natural environment
- Improved community cohesion and connectedness through a user-led approach and community volunteering initiatives.

4.5.2 To achieve these benefits the following targets have been set as performance indicators for 2021-2024 which will be monitored throughout the programme.

<b>ACTIVITY</b>	<b>OUTCOMES 2021- 2024</b>
<b>Physical improvements to the river and adjoining habitat</b>	
Improved functioning river and site enhancement	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 2.2km of river improved</li> <li>• 10 floodplain habitat features installed</li> <li>• 5 sites adjacent to the river improved</li> <li>• Feasibility assessment for a constructed wetland enhancement scheme</li> </ul>
Improved biodiversity for native flora	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 6.4km<sup>2</sup> area sown with UK native plants species</li> <li>• 5km of river surveyed for non-native invasive species including: Himalayan Balsam, Giant Hogweed and Japanese Knotweed. Awareness of the issue raised locally.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual report analysing spread and severity of non-native invasive species in target area.</li> </ul>
<b>Engaging the community</b>	
Residents' awareness raised of the impact of their actions on the river and how to reduce this	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>12,000 residents reached through all media and varied events with information that gives them a greater understanding of where water comes from, and how &amp; why to reduce their usage to leave more in the environment</li> </ul>
Development and delivery of a programme of a range of tasks and events to engage the whole community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1,500 individuals and 20 business involved in projects and activities including litter picking, surveying and habitat management. 4,500 volunteer hours.</li> <li>50 adults, 15 schools (500 pupils) and 50 young people participating in the River Colne education programmes</li> <li>100 individuals participating in health and wellbeing activities</li> <li>100 individuals participating in arts and heritage projects</li> </ul>
<b>Activities to engage and involve people in protecting the river landscape</b>	
Enhance existing citizen science activity to provide appropriate/adequate training for volunteers to collect meaningful water quality information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>40 citizen science volunteers recruited and trained in six survey techniques.</li> <li>1,000 volunteer hours of survey activity delivered and recorded</li> <li>Annual water quality report produced using collected riverfly, outfall safari and water chemical testing information and highlighting pollution hotspots to guide future activity and provide baseline</li> <li>Water quality forum to meet 4 times per year to assess and progress water quality issues with key stakeholders.</li> <li>1 conference/event run each year</li> </ul>
<b>Development of the river access and surrounding landscape</b>	
Improved physical access to the river corridor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop two destination points through seating and interpretation at key points, improved access points and their visibility.</li> </ul>
Improved river signage and interpretation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>26 signs installed along 5km of walks</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Signed heritage walk created and interpreted on site and via leaflet and on-line information</li> </ul>
<b>Funding</b>	
Funding	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Match funding obtained of £335,500 by 2024 via grant applications, corporate and public funding and development opportunities.</li> </ul>

4.5.3 The programme will not on its own deliver achievement of ‘Good Ecological Status’ under The Water Environment (Water Framework Directive) Regulations 2017 for the River Colne because the catchment is a large area beyond the council’s control and environmental recovery takes time. The programme will however make a significant contribution to achieving ‘good’ status.

#### **4.6 Programme Governance and Delivery**

4.6.1 As a long term programme involving a number of delivery partners effective governance is essential to successful delivery. The programme will follow the council’s internal governance procedures including its project management framework, overseen by the Enterprise Programme Management Office (EPMO) Assurance Group.

4.6.2 Groundwork South and Groundwork East have been appointed as the council’s managing partners to manage the delivery phase for 2021-2022. The scope of their appointments includes the following activities:

- Management of the programme
- Implementation of river improvement plans
- Implementation of access, landscape and signage improvements
- Developing and running a community engagement programme, including water quality monitoring
- Fundraising
- Marketing and communication in collaboration with programme partners

4.6.3 The programme will have a programme board comprised of officers from Watford Borough Council and Groundwork who will agree direction and decisions within the parameters of the programme to ensure success in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability. Groundwork will manage relationships with key stakeholders and programme partners and a wider stakeholder forum/friends group.

4.6.4 Groundwork will also appoint a dedicated programme officer to manage delivery, and, a part time community engagement officer to deliver the programme of community activities.

4.6.5 A Memorandum of Understanding governed the partnership between the council and external partners and stakeholders for the development phase and this will be renewed for the delivery phase.

4.6.6 In 2023-24, the programme will be brought back to Cabinet for review and to seek approval for subsequent years of the programme.

#### 4.7 Programme Costs and Funding Strategy

4.7.1 The development phase of the programme had a budget of £155,000 and £157,618 was spent to produce the proposed programme within this report. Groundwork successfully obtained £25,000 from the Environment Agency to support this work.

4.7.2 The full proposed 10 year programme delivery cost is estimated at £2.8M as set out in table 2 (and detailed in appendix 2). This includes all works, community engagement activity and monitoring.

Table 2: Estimated full 10 year programme cost

Site	Signage	Route improvement/creation	Other landscape/furniture	Art	River works	Total
Knutsford	9,250	15,570	8,750	15,000	92,450	<b>141,020</b>
Timberlake	7,500	12,000	23,250	-	278,300	<b>321,050</b>
Radlett Road	7,500	26,500	3,750	-	497,800	<b>535,550</b>
Waterfields	8,000	12,000	-	-	125,000	<b>145,000</b>
Tesco/disconnect	12,000	36,000	-	50,000	1,500	<b>99,500</b>
Oxhey Park	8,000	12,000	5,000	20,000	20,600	<b>65,600</b>
Riverside Park	5,500	310,000	3,500	-	69,500	<b>388,500</b>
Lairage Land	4,000	20,000	500	-	164,500	<b>189,000</b>
<b>Subtotal</b>	<b>61,750</b>	<b>444,070</b>	<b>44,750</b>	<b>85,000</b>	<b>1,249,650</b>	<b>1,885,220</b>
<b>Contingency 10%</b>						<b>189,040</b>
<b>Fees 15%</b>						<b>283,560</b>
<b>Inflation</b>						<b>56,712</b>
<b>Environmental monitoring (10 yrs)</b>						<b>240,000</b>
<b>Engagement (3 yrs)</b>						<b>142,500</b>
<b>Total</b>						<b>2,797,032</b>

4.7.3 Funding has been secured to deliver the first 3 years of the programme of £874,925 to date, made up of:

£750,000 Capital funding

£124,925 Confirmed external funding

**£874,925 Total Funding**

4.7.4 The first three years (2021-2024) of delivery has an estimated cost of £1.2M. Full costs will not be known until bids have been received for the works to be carried out in 2022 - 2024. The funding committed to date will be used as leverage to obtain match funding from grant providers, corporate and public funding to address the current funding shortfall of £335,301 for the 2021 – 2024 works.

4.7.5 Groundwork as a charity have significant experience in fundraising and are best placed to apply for a number external funding streams that the council would not normally be able to apply for. The funding strategy for the programme is shown in appendix 4 and 4a.

4.7.6 The use of Strategic Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funding will be considered for the programme via a separate funding application as the programme proceeds. The programme meets the requirements of the following Strategic CIL funding priorities:

- Green infrastructure and connectivity to the wider network
- Sustainability and Climate Change Initiatives

4.7.7 Any shortfall in funding will see works prioritised to derive the optimum benefit, or rephased as funding opportunities become available, working within the identified work streams for the programme. Any opportunities to obtain excess funding will be directed towards future planned works for years 4-10 or to bring these works forward to an earlier date.

4.7.8 Two expenditure and funding profiles are shown below, table 3 showing the fully funded scheme for 2021-2024 as proposed and table 4 showing a scheme using the current available funding.

**Table 3: Cost and funding profile for full proposed delivery phase 2021-2024**

	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	Total
Cost	£	£	£	£
Programme management	18,480	19,034	19,605	<b>57,119</b>
Work stream 1 – Environmental Improvements (River improvement plans)	52,248	357,000	270,798	<b>680,046</b>
Work stream 2 - Access, landscape, & signage improvements	118,350		99,256	<b>217,606</b>
Work streams 3 & 4 Environmental Monitoring and Community engagement	83,750	78,750	77,500	<b>240,000</b>
Fundraising	5,000	5,150	5,305	<b>15,455</b>
<b>Total forecast expenditure</b>	<b>277,828</b>	<b>459,934</b>	<b>472,464</b>	<b>1,210,226</b>
Environment Agency	-3,000			<b>-3,000</b>
Environment Agency	-57,000			<b>-57,000</b>
Affinity Water	-50,000			<b>-50,000</b>
Kickstart	-10,450			<b>-10,450</b>
Groundwork Local Family Learning	-2,675			<b>-2,675</b>
Youth Endowment Fund	-1,800			<b>-1,800</b>
Watford Borough Council (Capital)	-152,903	-159,934	-137,163	<b>-450,000</b>
<b>Total confirmed funding</b>	<b>-277,828</b>	<b>-459,934</b>	<b>-137,163</b>	<b>-874,925</b>
<b>Net funding required</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>335,301</b>	<b>335,301</b>

**Table 4: Cost and funding profile for available funding for 2021-2023**

Activity	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	TOTAL
	£	£	£	£
Programme management	18,480	19,034	3,000	40,514
Work stream 1 – Environmental Improvements (River improvement plans)	52,248	375,500	110,563	538,311
Work stream 2 - Access, landscape, & signage improvements	118,350	-	-	118,350
Work streams 3 & 4 Environmental Monitoring and Community engagement	83,750	83,850	-	167,600
Fundraising	5,000	5,150		10,150
<b>Total forecast expenditure</b>	<b>277,828</b>	<b>483,534</b>	<b>113,563</b>	<b>874,925</b>
Environment Agency	- 3,000			- 3,000
Environment Agency	- 57,000			- 57,000
Affinity Water	- 50,000			- 50,000
Kickstart	- 10,450			- 10,450
Groundwork Local Family Learning	- 2,675			- 2,675
Youth Endowment Fund	- 1,800			- 1,800
<b>Total External Funding</b>	<b>- 124,925</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>- 124,925</b>
Watford Borough Council (Capital)	- 152,903	- 483,534	- 113,563	- 750,000
<b>Total WBC Funding</b>	<b>- 152,903</b>	<b>- 483,534</b>	<b>- 113,563</b>	<b>- 750,000</b>
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>- 152,903</b>	<b>- 483,534</b>	<b>- 113,563</b>	<b>- 874,925</b>

4.7.9 The works that will be completed within the available funding will be assessed to derive optimum value for money and benefit for the river and people. The proposed scope and activities that would take place are shown below, with the exact scope and scale to be agreed once works have been tendered, by the project board in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability and the Group Head of Community and Environmental Services.

Based on the current funding shown in table 4 there would likely to be some reduction in the scope and scale of works at Oxhey Park, Riverside and Lairage Land.

#### **Year 1 (2021-2022):**

##### **River improvements:**

- Detailed design, consent and permitting process for in river and adjacent habitat works to be delivered in 2021/2022 for Knutsford Park, Timberlake, Waterfields, Radlett Road, Oxhey Park, Riverside Open Space, Lairage Land.
- Evaluation and reporting

##### **Access/landscape improvements**

- Design and tender of all access works identified in plans
- Develop and design branding for signage/interpretation
- Develop ideas for art proposals
- Prioritisation and delivery of key access landscape improvements that can be delivered before main habitat works

##### **Community engagement/monitoring**

- The appointment of a full time role developing and running a programme of activity and awareness raising on the river and across the town. Developing a Friends group covering the whole river. Undertake training for additional citizen scientists to monitor water quality. Continue to support the local water quality group to identify issues, potential actions and how to take them forward.

#### **Year 2 (2022-2023):**

##### **River improvements**

Procurement and delivery of:

- Knutsford – creation of a two stage channel, wetland scrapes, installing wooded debris, tree works.
- Timberlake – installation of wooded debris, restoration of first backwater, tree works
- Radlett Road – restoration of two further backwaters, marginal berms installed to the river, tree works
- Waterfields – bank works, installation of wooded debris, creation of a two stage channel, backwater/wet woodland

- Evaluation and reporting on the works

#### **Access improvements**

- None in this year

#### **Community Engagement**

- Part time role continuing the programme development and delivery and including new elements of schools and business engagement. Continued citizen science training and activity, and water quality group meetings

#### **Year 3 (2023-2024):**

#### **River improvements**

Procurement and delivery of:

- Oxhey Park – Installation of wooded debris, gravels, and wet woodland enhancement
- Riverside Park – Installation of wooded debris & gravels, fish passage work, and pond creation
- Lairage Land – Creation of backwaters & ponds, and installation of wooded debris
- Evaluation and reporting on the works

#### **Access improvements**

- Delivery of residual access improvements that could not be completed due to in channel works

#### **Community engagement/monitoring**

- Part time role continuing the programme development and delivery. Continued citizen science training and activity, and water quality group meetings

### **4.8 Future sustainable management**

4.8.1 To sustain the programme in to the future the programme will develop a stakeholder/friends forum to enable activities on the River Colne. This will be supported by the Council and its delivery partners such as Community Connection Projects CIC, Veolia and the ColneCAN network.

### **4.9 Procurement**

4.9.1 The council's Contract Procedure Rules allow exemptions from undertaking a procurement exercise in certain circumstances provided the value of the contract is under the value of contracts that have to comply with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015. The contracts with Groundwork East and Groundwork South for 2021/22 are under that threshold and have been awarded on the basis of there being a limited market. As the contract with Groundwork East exceeds £100,000 it must be reported to Cabinet and a copy of the exemption is at Appendix 5

- 4.9.2 The works required in 2022/24 exceed the threshold and will therefore be subject to a procurement exercise in the current financial year.
- 4.9.3 This programme involves a number of procurements for works and services. The procurements required in the period to 31 March 2022 will be managed by Groundwork following the Council's procurement rules.
- 4.9.4 The first procurement phase was for 'Design and Permitting', and Groundwork have awarded this contract to ARUP to provide technical design and obtain the relevant permits to be able to tender the subsequent works packages. This has been funded by an Environment Agency contribution.
- 4.9.5 As services and works are tendered recommendations will be made by Groundwork East, Groundwork South and officers to the Programme Board on the available funding against the tendered costs and on how to phase the programme. The programme board will agree priorities in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Sustainability and the Group Head of Community and Environmental Services.

## 5 Implications

### 5.1 Financial

- 5.1.1 The Shared Head of Finance comments that the financial implications are set out in section 4.7 of the report.

### 5.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)

- 5.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that the legal issues are set out in the body of the report

### 5.3 Equalities, Human Rights and Data Protection

- 5.3.1 Under s149 (1) of the Equality Act 2010 the council must have due regard, in the exercise of its functions, to the need to –

- eliminate discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct prohibited by the Act
- advance equality of opportunity between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them
- foster good relations between persons who share relevant protected characteristics and persons who do not share them.

Having had regard to the council's obligations under s149, it is considered that an equalities impact assessment is not required for the decisions set out in this report.

Matters of equality will be assessed and considered as part of the various proposed work streams and subsequent projects particularly in regard of access, environmental monitoring and engagement as required.

Groundwork the council's delivery partner have policies consistent with the council's obligations to the Equalities Act. Overall the programme aims to improve the River Colne for all.

### **Data Protection**

Having had regard to the council's obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (UK GDPR) 2018, it is considered that officers are not required to undertake a Data Processing Impact Assessment (DPIA) for this report.

### **5.4 Staffing**

5.4.1 The council has appointed interim staff in the Parks and Heritage service to mobilise this programme and are appointing a dedicated parks project manager. Groundwork East and South have appointed dedicated staff to deliver the work streams. Existing officers within Parks and Heritage will attend the Programme Board and Programme Team meetings as necessary to ensure delivery and access to the council's support services as necessary.

### **5.5 Accommodation**

5.5.1 There are no accommodation implications arising from this report

### **5.6 Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

5.6.1 There are no community safety or crime and disorder implications arising from this report

### **5.7 Sustainability**

5.7.1 This project is a direct action from the Council's Sustainability Strategy and directly contributes to addressing the climate change emergency.

## **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Rediscovering the R Colne – Public Consultation Results

Appendix 2 Rediscovering the R Colne - Summary Report

Appendix 3 Concept Site Plans for: Knutsford Playing Fields, Lairage Land Local Nature Reserve, Oxhey Park, Radlett Road Playing Fields, Tesco and Disconnect, Timberlake Allotments, Waterfields Recreation Ground, Riverside Park

Appendix 3a Rediscovering the R Colne – Landscape & Access Improvement Report

Appendix 3b Rediscovering the R Colne – Visual interpretation of landscape and access improvements

Appendix 3c Rediscovering the R Colne – Environmental Monitoring Project Feasibility Study

Appendix 3d Rediscovering the R Colne – Community Engagement Report

Appendix 4 Rediscovering the R Colne – Funding Strategy

Appendix 4a Rediscovering the R Colne – Funding Opportunity List

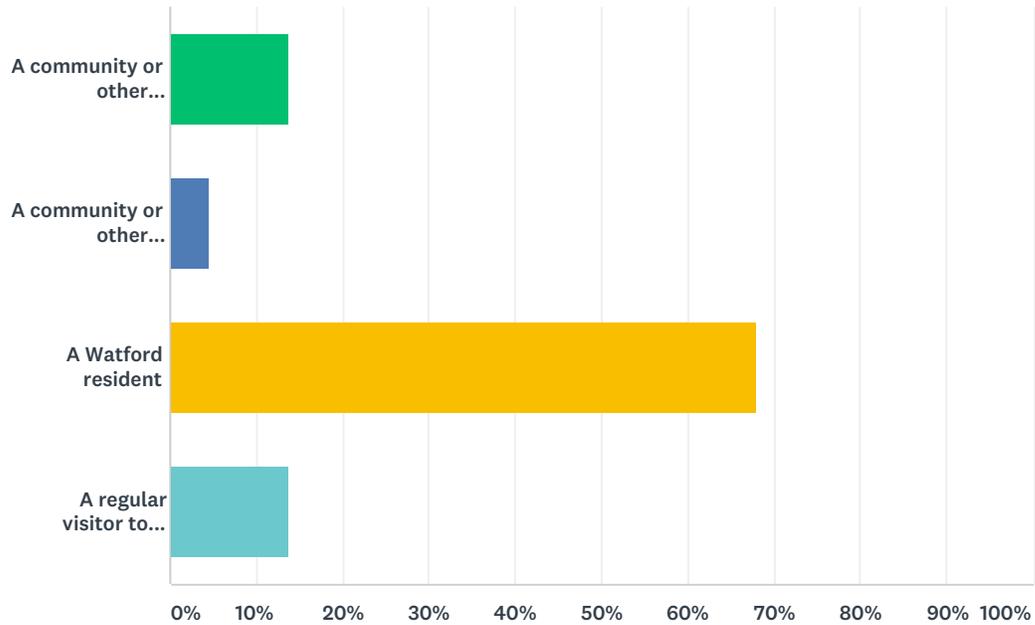
Appendix 5 Procurement Exemption Groundwork East

**Background papers**

The following background papers were used in the preparation of this report. If you wish to inspect or take copies of the background papers, please contact the officer named on the front page of the report.

## Q1 Are you?

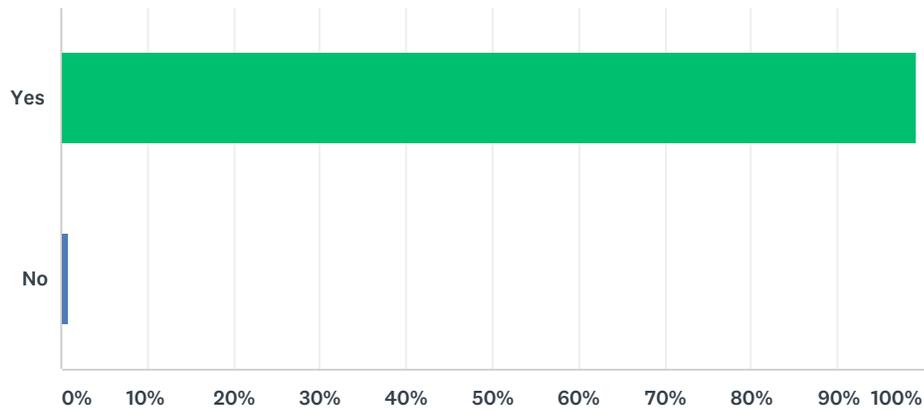
Answered: 131 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
A community or other organisation based in Watford	13.74%	18
A community or other organisation based outside of Watford	4.58%	6
A Watford resident	67.94%	89
A regular visitor to Watford (including someone who works in Watford but does not live in the borough)	13.74%	18
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>131</b>

## Q2 Before taking this survey, were you aware that the River Colne runs through Watford?

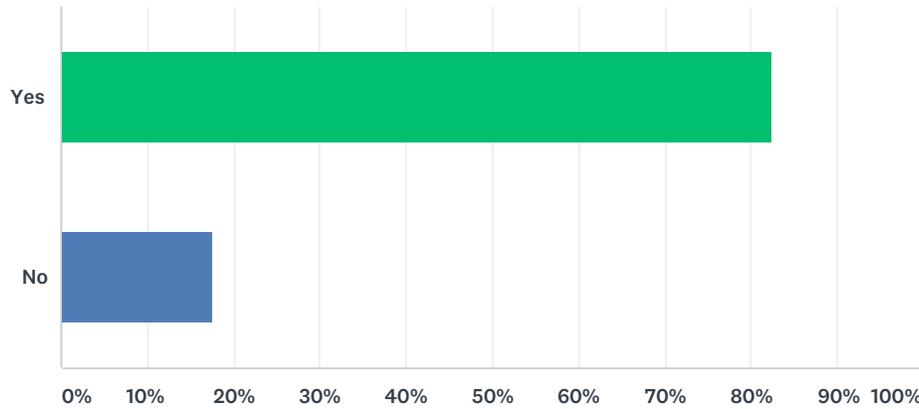
Answered: 129 Skipped: 3



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	99.22%	128
No	0.78%	1
TOTAL		129

### Q3 Do you know which parts of Watford the Colne runs through?

Answered: 131 Skipped: 1



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	82.44%	108
No	17.56%	23
TOTAL		131

## Q4 Which stretches of the Colne do you know?

Answered: 96 Skipped: 36

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Knutsford playing fields, and Lower High Street.	10/8/2019 2:29 PM
2	Oxhey Park, Riverside Rd, Radlett Rd, Tesco	10/8/2019 1:28 AM
3	Hospital, knutsfeild rugby park	10/7/2019 8:30 PM
4	The part of the river in West Watford at the back of the hospital	10/7/2019 11:58 AM
5	Bushey mill lane to tesco	10/6/2019 7:58 PM
6	Cutting across Water Lane, past the front of Tesco, then leading up to Oxhey Park, going through the park then along the Ebury Way. Not sure where else though	10/6/2019 1:50 PM
7	Radlett Road Playing Fields Munden Estate Arches Retail Park Ebury Way	10/5/2019 3:20 PM
8	Radlette Road	10/5/2019 10:52 AM
9	Riverwell / Lower High Street / Tesco / Water Lane / Stephenson Way / through to A41	10/4/2019 8:55 PM
10	The park area near the Meridon estate and the section that runs by Tesco	10/4/2019 8:13 PM
11	From the Munden Estate through to Wiggenghall Road.	10/3/2019 7:11 PM
12	Most of it.	10/2/2019 6:07 PM
13	Oxhey park	10/1/2019 7:28 PM
14	bushey mill lane, radlett road,to lower high street.	10/1/2019 6:44 PM
15	Hamper mill to Oxhey Park	10/1/2019 3:25 PM
16	Radlett Road and under the arches Water Lane and park Past Tesco supermarket/Lower High Street Oxhey Park Towards Ebury Way	9/30/2019 7:01 PM
17	Munden Estate	9/29/2019 12:33 PM
18	Riverside and near tesco	9/25/2019 10:37 PM
19	Oxhey Park Radlett Road Along by tesco Ebury way	9/25/2019 7:47 AM
20	By Bushey Arches	9/25/2019 7:29 AM
21	All of it and some	9/25/2019 7:03 AM
22	Oxhey Park As I walk over the bridge on lower high street By Tesco's & parts as is runs north to A41	9/25/2019 6:54 AM
23	Water lane, west Watford	9/25/2019 1:14 AM
24	Most familiar with the route from North Watford (Meriden) through to South Watford/Oxhey	9/24/2019 11:27 PM
25	Parallel with A4008.	9/24/2019 10:40 PM
26	Radlett Road Park and to Tesco etc	9/24/2019 6:34 PM
27	At Rickmansworth	9/24/2019 10:46 AM
28	All	9/22/2019 12:54 AM
29	Croxley Moor, Aquadrome Rickmansworth	9/21/2019 8:27 PM
30	around Radlett road area and Oxhey park	9/21/2019 8:09 PM
31	Oxhey Park Waterfields Railway Arches Alongside Radlett Road Otterspool	9/21/2019 12:30 PM
32	From Bricket Wood all the way through Watford into Rickmansworth. As a child was taken on my first fishing trip to the Colne off Radlett Road, also as a child fished it in the Munden estate. Still fish it in Rickmansworth/West Hyde 55 years later!	9/21/2019 12:23 PM

## Rediscovering the River Colne 2019

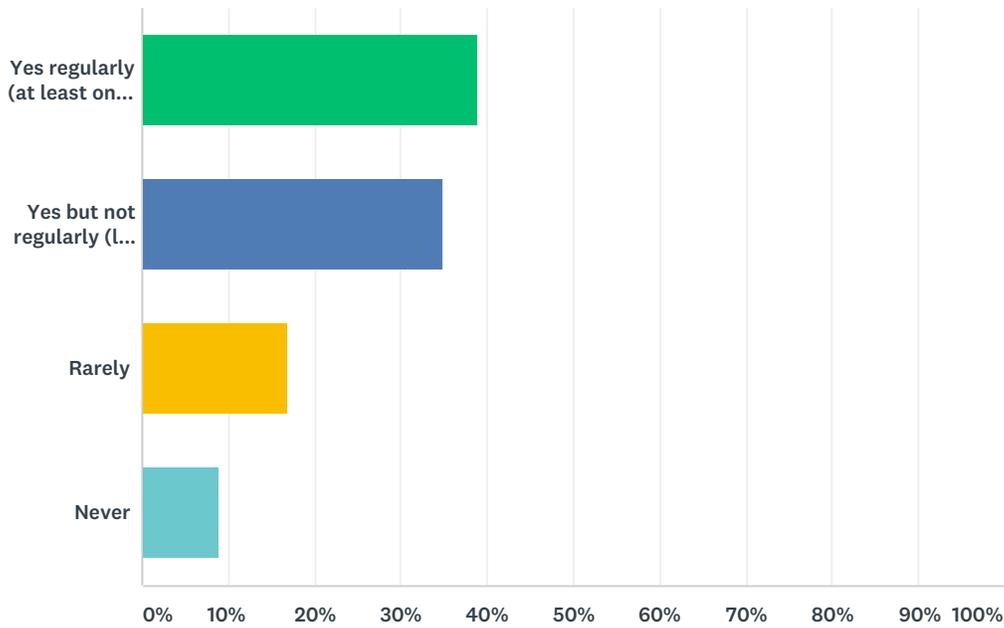
33	All	9/21/2019 12:20 PM
34	From where it joins with the Ver in Bricket Wood through to Rickmansworth.	9/21/2019 12:25 AM
35	Radlet rd and central Watford area	9/20/2019 6:22 PM
36	Cassiobury park, near imperial way	9/20/2019 5:02 PM
37	Oxhey Park, lairige land and though the farm.	9/20/2019 2:33 PM
38	I know the stretches in Oxhey Park, along the Ebury Way and near the Rickmansworth lakes best, but have recently walked the stretch up to Rugby club on Radlett Rd. I	9/20/2019 9:53 AM
39	All of it - I run 3 times a week and at least once a week I run along stretches of the river. I usually start my river runs in Oxhey Park and either go upstream, sometimes as far as where the River Ver joins (and beyond to St Albans) or downstream to Ricky and down to Harefield.	9/20/2019 8:55 AM
40	Radlett road playing fields near Greatham Road Rickmansworth close to Batchworth	9/20/2019 12:08 AM
41	From Garston, North Watford, especially Radlett Road and through to Denham/Uxbridge.	9/19/2019 11:36 PM
42	Cassiobury Park	9/19/2019 10:38 PM
43	Part of the Colne that runs under the arches next to Waterdells Park The part that runs through Oxhey Park The part that continues from Oxhey Park, passed Riverside at the back of the hospital, passed the Lairage and on under the Ebury Way passed Brightwells Farm to Hamper Mill.	9/19/2019 10:31 AM
44	Radlett Road Bushey Mill Lane	9/19/2019 9:19 AM
45	From Link Way through Oxhey Park to the Lairage land at Vicarage Road and beyond the borough boundary toward Rickmansworth	9/19/2019 8:52 AM
46	From bushey mill lane, knutsford playing fields, radlett road playing field, waterfields park, by Tesco, to oxhey park.	9/18/2019 11:07 PM
47	Casiobury park	9/18/2019 10:23 PM
48	Watford Rickmansworth	9/18/2019 7:30 PM
49	Eastbury Road, by Tesco and Lane, Radlett Road playing fields, past Munden Farm	9/18/2019 3:47 PM
50	the entire stretch from Otterspool to Rickmansworth	9/17/2019 10:50 PM
51	Knutsford Estate to West Watford	9/17/2019 1:56 PM
52	The stretch of the river going Batchworth Heath area, along the bottom of Oxhey Park and through Watford.	9/17/2019 1:33 PM
53	From the A41 down to past Oxhey Hall, thereafter I believe it joins the canal near Rickmansworth.	9/17/2019 1:22 PM
54	All of it	9/16/2019 10:16 PM
55	Mainly around rickmansworth and mill end	9/16/2019 9:42 PM
56	Munden Estate Knutsford Playing Fields, Radlett Road Playing Fields, Waterfields. Oxhey Park	9/16/2019 5:20 PM
57	I have been on walks along the river through Riverside Park and Riverside Recreation Ground which is my favourite green spot in Watford.	9/16/2019 3:33 PM
58	oxhey park, lower reaches	9/16/2019 10:36 AM
59	By Top Golf By Tesco By Oxhey Park Towards Rickmansworth	9/15/2019 12:25 PM
60	Radlett road, Oxhey park, riverside road	9/15/2019 9:19 AM
61	From the bushey arches past the watford rugby club	9/14/2019 10:45 PM
62	A41 to link road;	9/14/2019 4:57 PM
63	By Tesco & those mentioned above	9/14/2019 2:19 PM
64	From Top Golf to Tesco	9/14/2019 10:32 AM
65	OXHEY PARK	9/14/2019 9:45 AM
66	The whole of it through Watford and in addition I have walked it all, as closely as that is possible, between Colney Heath and Staines, some of it several times.	9/13/2019 11:20 PM

## Rediscovering the River Colne 2019

67	From North Watford to Tesco.	9/13/2019 10:08 PM
68	the bit that runs passed Tesco Extra and the bit near Wall Hall	9/13/2019 7:01 PM
69	By radlet road	9/13/2019 6:21 PM
70	Mundens Estate Knutsford playing fields Oxhey Park	9/13/2019 6:16 PM
71	Near Ricksmanworth	9/13/2019 5:31 PM
72	Near the hospital Past Tesco and parallel to Radlett Road Through the Mundens and along to the stepping stones	9/13/2019 5:27 PM
73	Watford	9/13/2019 4:28 PM
74	Stretches near the A41 Colne Way, Radlett Road playing fields and Riverside Park.	9/13/2019 3:39 PM
75	Watford Museum has information on all of the Colne in Watford, in particular places of interest like the site of the old lido	9/13/2019 3:07 PM
76	Through Waterfields park and Tesco's. Along radlett road	9/13/2019 12:26 PM
77	Knutsford Playing Fields, Radlett Rd Playing Fields, Waterfields Recreational Ground and Tesco's	9/12/2019 10:04 PM
78	North Watford to Lower High street	9/12/2019 9:34 PM
79	Riverside rec, Oxhey Park, Tesco, Waterfields rec, Radlett Road Rec, Knutsford Rec.	9/12/2019 4:56 PM
80	All of them	9/12/2019 4:28 PM
81	x	9/12/2019 3:33 PM
82	Knutsford Playing Fields, Timberlake Allotments, Radlett Road Playing Fields, Waterfields Recreation Ground, Oxhey Park, Riverside Recreation Ground and Lairage Land	9/12/2019 3:08 PM
83	w	9/12/2019 2:59 PM
84	Section from Tesco to the A41 and through the Munden Estate Section around Bushey Arches and through Oxhey Park Views of river from from cycle path on old railway from Wiggenghall Road to Croxley Common Moor	9/12/2019 2:45 PM
85	From Bricket Wood to the Watford town centre	9/12/2019 1:52 PM
86	dont know the name sorry	9/12/2019 1:47 PM
87	Through Rickmansworth and Waterfields, Oxhey park, Knutsford, Riverside park, Watford Riverwell.	9/12/2019 1:31 PM
88	Knutsford, Cassiobury, Waterfields, Edbury Way. Broadacres, Thurlows, Castles and Tolpits lakes and StanlesPools.	9/12/2019 1:23 PM
89	Oxhey Park , Cassiobury Park , Riverside, Knutsford etc	9/12/2019 1:19 PM
90	Most of it in the Watford area - from Bricket Wood, through passed the M1 link road past Watford Rugby Club, down past Tesco superstore, through the lower high street, on through Oxhey park, behind Vicarage road and beyond to Merchant Taylors where I went to school and then in to Rickmansworth.	9/12/2019 1:08 PM
91	I regularly walk/cycle along the section between Bushey Mill Lane and Water Lane. I am familiar with the section west of Wiggenghall Road, from working on the Croxley Rail Link project. I sometimes walk alongside and cross the river at various points between the A41 and Drop Lane.	9/12/2019 1:04 PM
92	Bricket wood to the Mundens	9/12/2019 12:45 PM
93	The stretch from the Radlet Road playing fields all the way to Tesco, through Tesco and out through Oxhey Park and then on along Riverside park and then under the Ebury way in two places.	9/12/2019 12:28 PM
94	Rickmansworth, Denham, Uxbridge	9/12/2019 12:22 PM
95	Around the edge of town - by the large Tesco (which is filthy), Oxhey Park, Cassiobury Park etc	9/11/2019 9:37 PM
96	The parts you can easily access at Cassiobury Park, around the large Tesco (where it is very polluted with trash and infested with rats around the the flyover), Oxhey Park and along the Ebury Way.	9/11/2019 1:29 PM

## Q5 Do you / your organisation currently use the River Colne corridor (the open spaces around the river)?

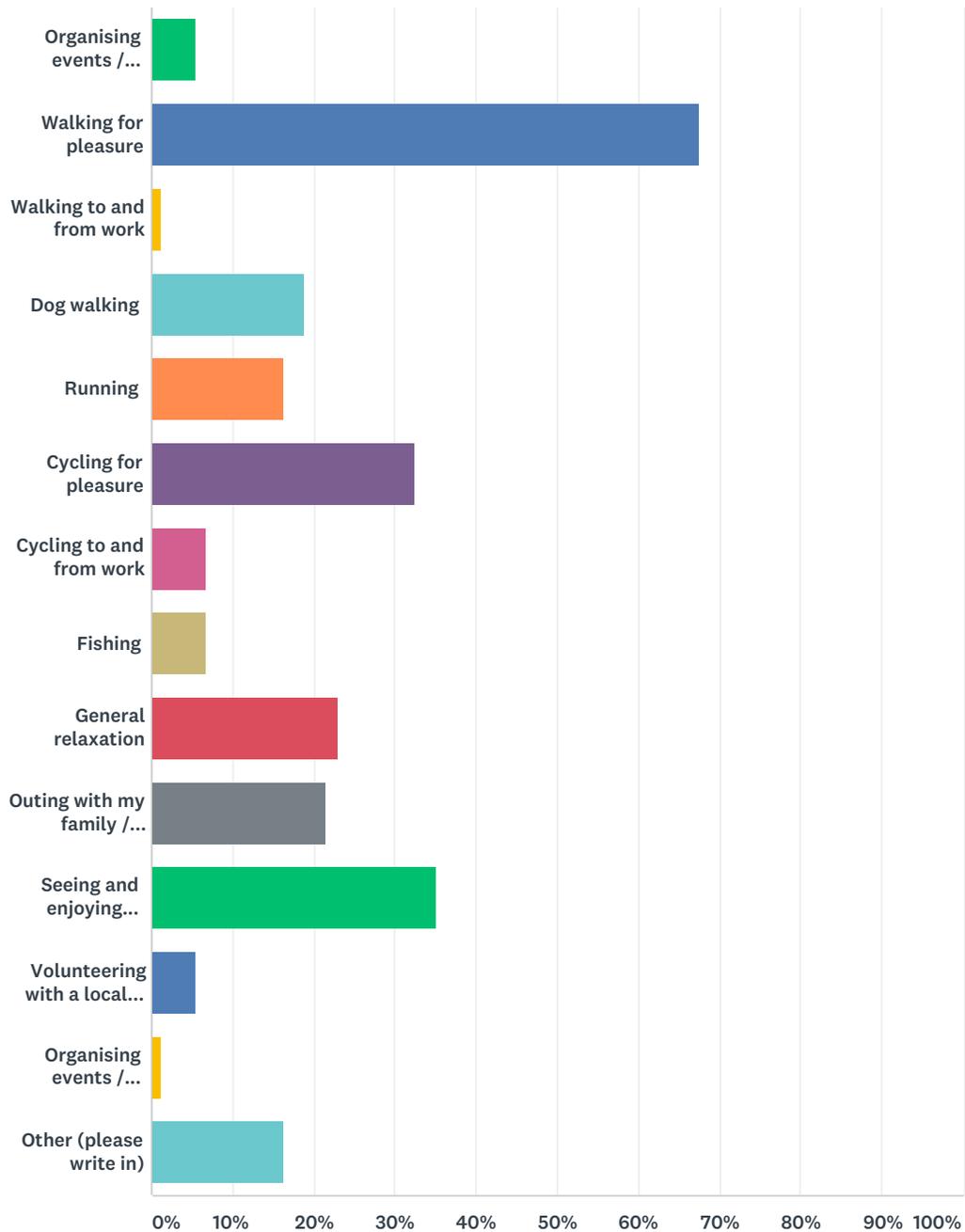
Answered: 100 Skipped: 32



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes regularly (at least once a month)	39.00%	39
Yes but not regularly (less than once a month)	35.00%	35
Rarely	17.00%	17
Never	9.00%	9
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>100</b>

## Q6 For what reasons do you currently use the Colne river corridor in Watford? Please tick all that apply

Answered: 74 Skipped: 58



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Organising events / activities	5.41%	4
Walking for pleasure	67.57%	50
Walking to and from work	1.35%	1
Dog walking	18.92%	14

## Rediscovering the River Colne 2019

Running	16.22%	12
Cycling for pleasure	32.43%	24
Cycling to and from work	6.76%	5
Fishing	6.76%	5
General relaxation	22.97%	17
Outing with my family / children	21.62%	16
Seeing and enjoying wildlife	35.14%	26
Volunteering with a local group	5.41%	4
Organising events / activities	1.35%	1
Other (please write in)	16.22%	12
Total Respondents: 74		

#	OTHER (PLEASE WRITE IN)	DATE
1	walking to shops	10/4/2019 8:56 PM
2	The Courtlands residents Association does not have any role here but its members do use the river as above.	10/3/2019 7:14 PM
3	Conservation projects to conserve the Colne's habitats and its wildlife.	10/2/2019 6:08 PM
4	Walking into Watford for various events/occasions	9/30/2019 7:02 PM
5	Gardening work	9/21/2019 8:27 PM
6	Swam near Rickmansworth once	9/20/2019 9:54 AM
7	When I was a boy I took my canoe on to the river. I would love to be able to swim in the river and swim regularly in Moor Park lake at Merchants Taylor	9/20/2019 8:57 AM
8	canoeing	9/18/2019 3:33 PM
9	I would like to enjoy the wildlife if there was any	9/16/2019 10:17 PM
10	Manage parks and open spaces.	9/12/2019 4:58 PM
11	x	9/12/2019 3:33 PM
12	Veolia manage the parks and open spaces on behalf of Watford Borough Council	9/12/2019 3:09 PM

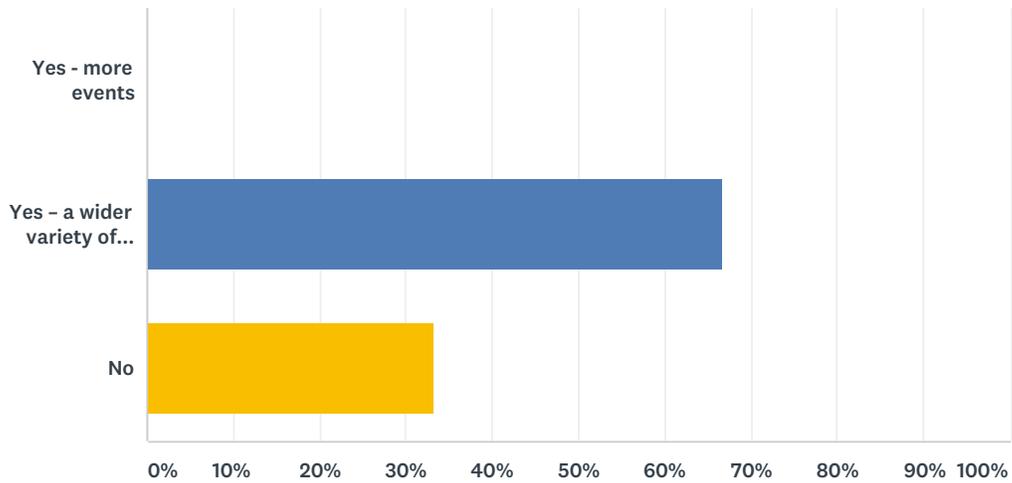
**Q7 What does your organisation currently offer in regards to events / activities on or about the River Colne? Please write in.**

Answered: 3 Skipped: 129

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	HMWT - a programme of events led through various projects.	10/2/2019 6:12 PM
2	Cycle rides	9/21/2019 12:21 PM
3	Chair of Friends of Oxhey Park do regular park and river clear ups, work with community payback organise weekly activities for them, work with various schools.	9/12/2019 4:30 PM

## Q8 Would you like to be able to offer more or a wider variety of events / activities than at present?

Answered: 3 Skipped: 129



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes - more events	0.00%	0
Yes – a wider variety of events	66.67%	2
No	33.33%	1
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>3</b>

Q9 Is there anything that prevents you / would prevent you from offering additional events / activities that at present? Please write in below.

Answered: 2 Skipped: 130

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	Resources	10/2/2019 6:12 PM
2	Improved access for cycling, Wider safer tracks.	9/21/2019 12:22 PM

## Q10 Are there any events or activities that you would like to see in future on or around the River Colne that you think would encourage more people to get involved with the river? Please write in below.

Answered: 54 Skipped: 78

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	More people involved with Green Gym	10/6/2019 7:59 PM
2	Could it be opened up a bit in Oxhey Park and used for boating, e.g. rowing boats like in Regents Park? Not sure about impact on wildlife though. Activities for children to introduce them to the flora and fauna in and around the water. Something at the weekend rather than in school groups would be good	10/6/2019 1:53 PM
3	Would like to see more bins near the Riverside as I regular pickup rubbish while walking along it. Access to waders and cleaning equipment so residents can volunteer to help keep the river clean	10/5/2019 3:22 PM
4	picnics	10/5/2019 10:53 AM
5	public "litter-pick" events; bio-blitz events	10/4/2019 8:58 PM
6	Wildlife sessions	10/4/2019 8:14 PM
7	Organised walks Improved foot ways and separation of cycle and walkways at certain points to improve safety.	10/3/2019 7:17 PM
8	More family-based events.	10/2/2019 6:12 PM
9	fishing	10/1/2019 6:45 PM
10	River cleaning. Wildlife watching	10/1/2019 3:26 PM
11	Small concerts by local groups/ schools?	9/30/2019 7:03 PM
12	Wild open space - wild life enjoyment ? Swimming ?	9/25/2019 6:57 AM
13	#Trashtag challenge: volunteers pick up a little or a lot of litter surrounding or in the river itself	9/24/2019 11:30 PM
14	Litter picks Cycling trails	9/24/2019 6:35 PM
15	Making sure the river bank is accessible and kept clean/litter free. Perhaps having a River Ranger (like a park ranger) to encourage users to interact with the environment and keep it clean	9/24/2019 11:02 AM
16	Conservation work Walking Guided tours Open spaces and parks Good new architecture incorporating the river	9/21/2019 8:29 PM
17	First action would be a clean up, improved access and better flow	9/21/2019 8:11 PM
18	Access & information	9/21/2019 12:23 PM
19	Would be good to see more water in it	9/21/2019 12:27 AM
20	Fit camps on colney valley area by radlett nriad	9/20/2019 6:23 PM
21	Organised walks for wildlife, like bat walks, moth evenings etc.	9/20/2019 2:35 PM
22	If the river was cleaner there are places where one can paddle or swim. I noticed recently though that what appeared to be raw sewage was pouring in to the river along the stretch to the north of Warer Lane, there was a strong stink. So I would not consider doing these activities until the issue is dealt with	9/20/2019 9:59 AM
23	Swimming Canoeing	9/20/2019 8:57 AM
24	Raft races, picnics	9/20/2019 12:09 AM
25	Teach children to fish and get to know what lives in and around the river	9/19/2019 11:37 PM

## Rediscovering the River Colne 2019

26	People, especially schools and children could be encouraged to help with the maintenance of the river (I know some schools are already involved) Very difficult to envisage how the Colne could be used for water activities. Boating would be good!	9/19/2019 10:33 AM
27	Make all paths by river feel safe - some are under bridges, hard to see. I sometimes feel unsafe when running alone. More footbridges over river. Stop people dealing drugs or camping by riverside.	9/18/2019 11:10 PM
28	Nature days..... Kids fishing	9/18/2019 10:24 PM
29	More taking care and nature walks introducing more wildlife	9/18/2019 7:33 PM
30	More events getting to know stretches of the river, Children's activities such as exploring the river or the shallower parts would be great and making sure it is clean and has plenty of biodiversity	9/18/2019 3:48 PM
31	canoeing	9/18/2019 3:33 PM
32	events/ open days to make people appreciate the river, however need to clean up some poor stretches first	9/17/2019 10:52 PM
33	While some ideas (e.g. kayaking) may be understandably attractive for some (e.g. to link all the way to the Grand Union Canal at Rickmansworth, if possible?), I can see their downsides also, so for kayaking you'd probably need to do some dredging / regulation (too expensive) as a safety issue, plus even if it were done it could well be a big disruption to wildlife. In summary, the stretch from Oxhey Park towards Rickmansworth (I am most familiar with the Ebury Way by bike / walking nearby) is already highly attractive & most peaceful, simplest may be to just safeguard the existing natural environment, "if it ain't broke, don't fix it".	9/17/2019 1:30 PM
34	No, there are too many people already.	9/16/2019 10:17 PM
35	Events to show what wildlife can be seen in the area people don't know what is on their doorstep	9/16/2019 9:45 PM
36	Remove the cray fish; de-silt along its length; restock with viable river fish species; improve banks for fishing access at various points (swims).	9/14/2019 4:59 PM
37	Boating in oxhey park Volunteer days and groups as in Cassiobury	9/14/2019 2:20 PM
38	WHITE WATER RAFTING	9/14/2019 9:46 AM
39	A cleaner river. Details of routes to walk.	9/13/2019 5:32 PM
40	No	9/13/2019 4:29 PM
41	I would like to see a cycle path along the stretch of the Colne as it is flat and covers a lot of ground. I would like to see lots more opportunities for children to pond dip and paddle in the river, if it was cleaned up and made good it could be a focal point for spending quality leisure time for all families	9/13/2019 12:28 PM
42	River / Nature things - activities/walks	9/12/2019 10:05 PM
43	Restoration project to open up the river and encourage better/increased biodiversity.	9/12/2019 4:59 PM
44	Outfall monitoring, riverfly monitoring, reporting litter & pollution, invasive species control.	9/12/2019 4:31 PM
45	x	9/12/2019 3:33 PM
46	regular american signal crayfish trapping works to increase the flow of the river removal of invasive species like himalayan balsam	9/12/2019 3:11 PM
47	Not clear if this is about directly with the river or the general vicinity. The river itself isn't particularly accessible because of either steep banks or dense vegetation.	9/12/2019 2:49 PM
48	Maybe something like the Green Gym only outside of working hours eg. weekends and evenings.	9/12/2019 1:54 PM
49	Clean up events	9/12/2019 1:32 PM
50	General events and activities that may centre around the river. Encouraging the school children to acknowledge the river and parks they have around. Education must include outside activities.	9/12/2019 1:25 PM
51	activities for children	9/12/2019 1:20 PM
52	Walking the route of the river. Wildlife survey by community to build up a picture of diversity.	9/12/2019 1:08 PM

## Rediscovering the River Colne 2019

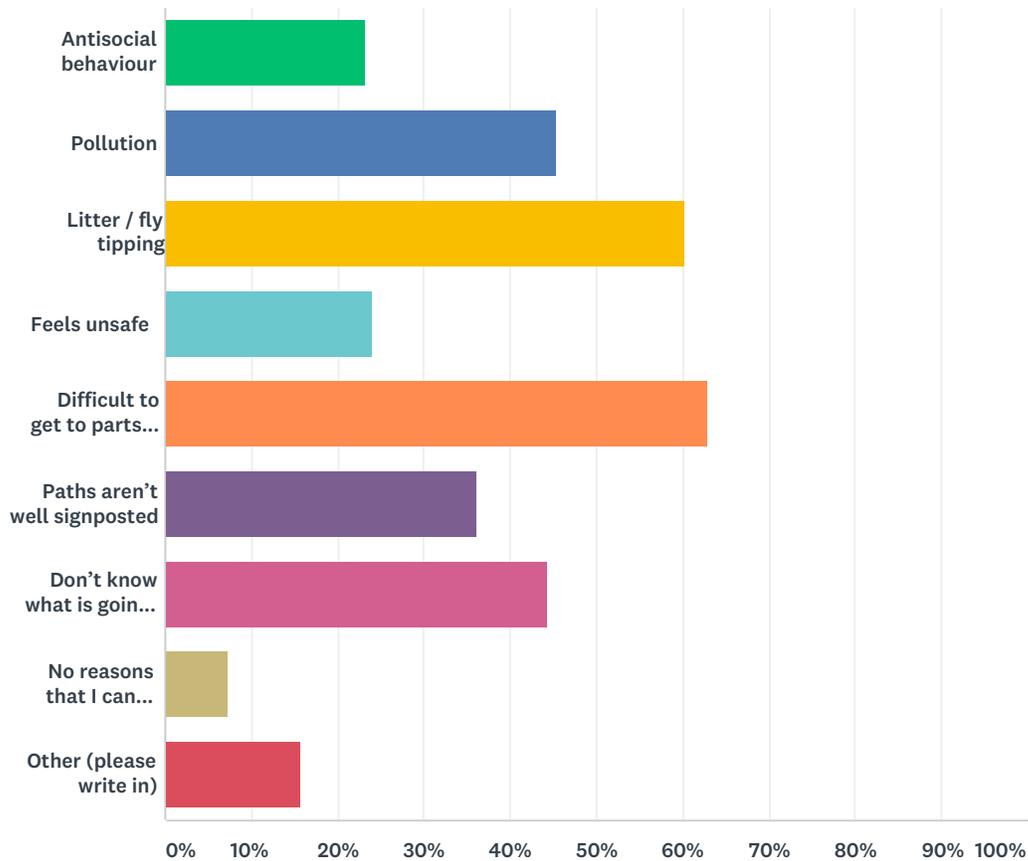
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53	Do something about the horrible Riverwell development plans in West Watford which will destroy the peaceful part of the river - and negatively impact the river colne. Just look how dirty the town pond is, this is what the river will look like thanks to the horrible Riverwell development plans - which will open the river up without any barriers to stop all the rubbish blowing into it (as seen along the stretch near Tesco).	9/11/2019 9:41 PM
54	The Council needs to engage with stakeholders to help clean it up first and to facilitate to STOP the awful Riverwell development - which will only make the pollution problems worse (due to ill thought out plans which will allow more trash to easily wash into the river from all the cheap looking flats). The Riverwell development area should instead be turned it a natural nature reserve with a path alongside the river to encourage local resident wellbeing.	9/11/2019 1:33 PM

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### Q11 In your opinion is there anything that currently prevents people from using the Colne river corridor? Please tick all that apply

Answered: 108 Skipped: 24



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Antisocial behaviour	23.15%	25
Pollution	45.37%	49
Litter / fly tipping	60.19%	65
Feels unsafe	24.07%	26
Difficult to get to parts of the river	62.96%	68
Paths aren't well signposted	36.11%	39
Don't know what is going on around the river	44.44%	48
No reasons that I can think of	7.41%	8
Other (please write in)	15.74%	17
Total Respondents: 108		

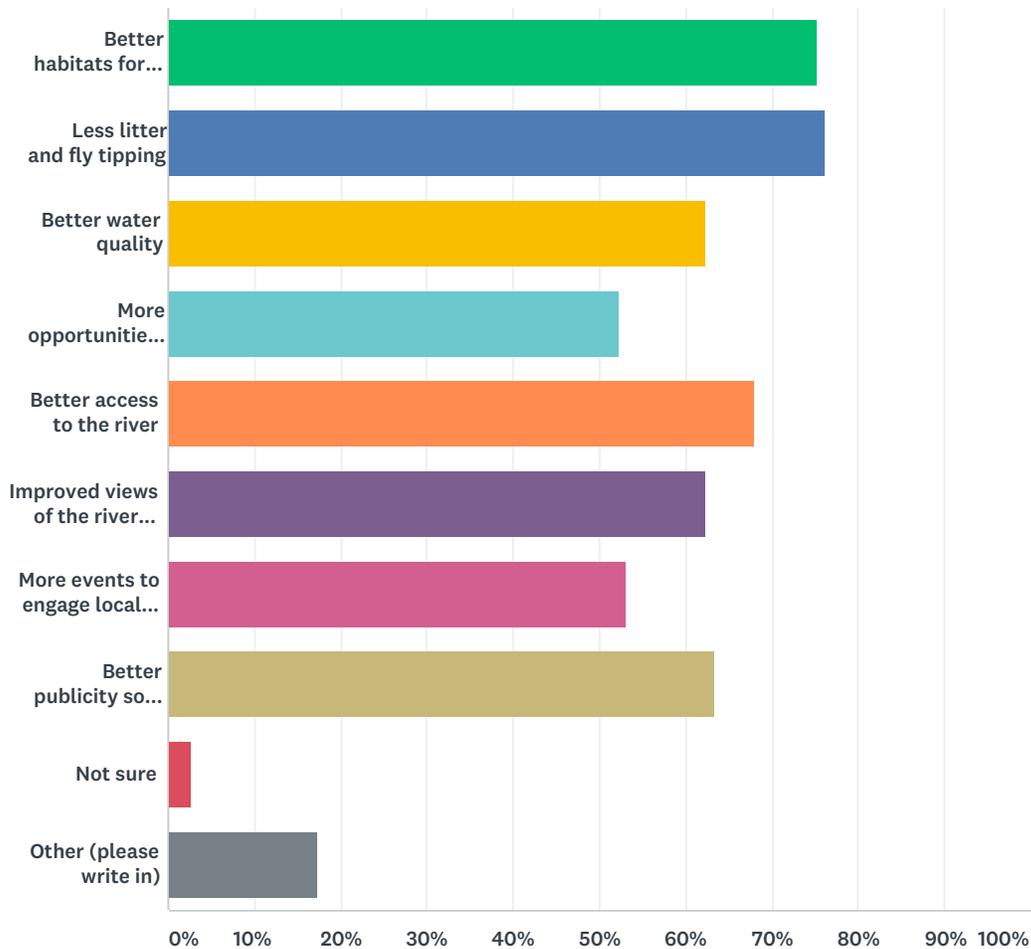
#	OTHER (PLEASE WRITE IN)	DATE
1	Rough sleepers. Often tents in the area with lots of litter.	10/6/2019 8:01 PM

## Rediscovering the River Colne 2019

2	Some paths are (were) closed off following treatment of himalayan balsam and/or japanese knotweed	10/4/2019 8:59 PM
3	General lack of awareness amongst residents of the existence of this river and its paths.	10/3/2019 7:21 PM
4	I am a pensioner and a disabled angler who needs easy access to rivers etc. If I had knowledge of safe areas to someone who needs a walking stick and limited carrying distance, I would like to fish on the River Colne. I have fished on the River Grade many times, in Cassiobury Park and Croxley Green. I also like to fish on the Grand Union Canal.	9/24/2019 10:51 PM
5	The part of the river near me is terrible. The area is full of litter and overgrown. It is a total waste. There is half the wildlife there was a few years ago when I was a kid growing up	9/20/2019 2:45 PM
6	Parking	9/20/2019 12:11 AM
7	very overgrown in places	9/18/2019 3:34 PM
8	The River Colne that flows past the Mercedes garage is rather unattractive and often has litter in it.	9/17/2019 1:35 PM
9	I've never felt threatened along the above stretches. In a way its apparent insignificance is a part of its attraction.	9/17/2019 1:32 PM
10	Laziness. Ignorance	9/16/2019 10:19 PM
11	It hasn't been recognised as a valuable resource	9/14/2019 9:38 AM
12	I was shocked recently to see how overgrown it had become around the lairage land. The footbridge from Moor View was overgrown with brambles and almost impassable. And the river itself was so overgrown that it could not be seen. Also it seems a great pity that a fence was allowed to be erected about a year ago at Lower High Street, preventing the previous access alongside the river towards Waterfields Way.	9/13/2019 11:32 PM
13	Cyclists	9/13/2019 4:30 PM
14	The river is sometimes hidden away from plain view and areas are left to overgrow. development is routed around or covers areas which should be left open. developments need to leave open spaces adjacent to river banks for all to use and for natural flooding.	9/12/2019 1:29 PM
15	Some of the paths are overgrown/muddy (eg Radlett Rd playing fields), almost suggesting that you don't walk beside the river, but take a different route. It's also difficult to see the river in a lot of places .	9/12/2019 1:16 PM
16	The buiding work connected to the horrible Riverwell development in West Watford - which will destroy the peaceful part of the river - and negatively impact the river colne. And the filth in the river around Tesco, which Riverwell will make so much worse.	9/11/2019 9:45 PM
17	Roverwell development building site stops access	9/11/2019 1:34 PM

## Q12 In what ways do you think the River Colne and the river corridor in Watford could be improved? Please tick all that apply.

Answered: 109 Skipped: 23



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Better habitats for wildlife	75.23%	82
Less litter and fly tipping	76.15%	83
Better water quality	62.39%	68
More opportunities for recreation and exercise e.g. fishing, walking, cycling	52.29%	57
Better access to the river	67.89%	74
Improved views of the river corridor	62.39%	68
More events to engage local people with the river	53.21%	58
Better publicity so people know it is there and what is on	63.30%	69
Not sure	2.75%	3
Other (please write in)	17.43%	19

## Rediscovering the River Colne 2019

Total Respondents: 109

#	OTHER (PLEASE WRITE IN)	DATE
1	Lit, make it a Watford feature, trees, dog friendly, no cars, safe and pleasant like cassiobury park, make it a practical walking link between cassiobury park and Town.	10/7/2019 8:35 PM
2	Along alot of areas there is alot of sound pollution from the busy roads. If noise barriers could be built it'd make the River Colne alot more of a tranquil environment for people to enjoy	10/5/2019 3:23 PM
3	Maps at strategic places	9/30/2019 7:05 PM
4	Good urban design to include open spaces people want to use, architecture that enhances the river and relation of Watford to it	9/21/2019 8:31 PM
5	More water, better flow	9/21/2019 12:28 AM
6	Needs managering, need to be cleared from rubbish. Matbe put up some bird boxes.	9/20/2019 2:45 PM
7	There is sewage entering the river between Water Lane and Radlett Rd section.	9/20/2019 10:03 AM
8	Restore (raise) water levels to levels that allow swimming and canoeing	9/20/2019 8:59 AM
9	Improved cycle path. Management of the trees bushes etc to improve the habitat for wildlife in general	9/20/2019 12:11 AM
10	Clear some of the obstructions along the river	9/19/2019 11:39 PM
11	"Better access to river" is tempting, but would need careful management.	9/17/2019 1:32 PM
12	Keeping the river maintained like the NRA used too	9/16/2019 9:48 PM
13	Publication of a Colne River Walk leaflet or booklet, similar (on a smaller scale) to the Thames Walk, which is of course a national trail. Perhaps there already is one?	9/13/2019 11:32 PM
14	Clear overgrown trees and shrubs	9/13/2019 7:02 PM
15	No cycling	9/13/2019 4:30 PM
16	More about the heritage	9/13/2019 3:08 PM
17	More Healthy Walking options	9/12/2019 1:03 PM
18	Do something about the horrible Riverwell development plans in West Watford which will destroy the peaceful part of the river - and negatively impact the river colne. If the Council really cared about the river - and local residents - it would stop the development and turn the land into a lovely nature reserve for future generations and not a dumping ground for trash from all the horrible flats.	9/11/2019 9:45 PM
19	And stop the Riverwell development	9/11/2019 1:34 PM

## Q13 Are there any other comments you would like to share with regard to the River Colne and the river corridor

Answered: 54 Skipped: 78

#	RESPONSES	DATE
1	The river needs to be cleaned, the banks restored, and then looked after.	10/8/2019 2:30 PM
2	Regularly a strong smell of sewage at stretch from Water lane to Waterfields rec, under the A411 road bridge. Too much litter on banks as it runs through Tesco. Fenced off area isn't cleaned enough. The section at Lower High St is sad but hopefully with the new development on the old gas works site the riverside environment will be improved. I would like to see name signs on the bridges like you see in some counties when you cross rivers, "River Colne" Particularly on Lower High St and Wigenhall bridges. Improving the the look of the bridges would also help improve the identity and awareness of the river. The Lower High St bridge is horrible and much more should be made of it to respect the river. Presumably somewhere at this point was the historical river crossing where the Ford in the towns name was.	10/8/2019 1:54 AM
3	Stop it being used by sex workers, drunks and druggies.	10/7/2019 8:36 PM
4	No mention in all your reports of the Green Gym volunteers who do a fantastic job keeping the river area clear and clean	10/6/2019 8:03 PM
5	We're very lucky to have the river and glad to see this project and all the hard work being put in. Well-done guys	10/5/2019 3:23 PM
6	it is a nice river near a town.	10/5/2019 10:56 AM
7	Enforcement action needs to be taken (and properly publicised) against those found to be polluting or fly-tipping (e.g. behind Mercedes showroom). Reducing pollution / litter into the river at Watford benefits not only Watford but those communities downstream too. Similarly Watford needs to work with those upstream to ensure the quality of the river as it enters Watford is as good as it can be.	10/4/2019 9:01 PM
8	What the local council is proposing is the be applauded. Thank you	10/4/2019 8:15 PM
9	My comments relate to the wider Colne, not just Watford.	10/2/2019 6:12 PM
10	A much under used and under estimated local resource	10/1/2019 3:28 PM
11	The river has been vastly improved in the past 20 years.	9/30/2019 7:05 PM
12	Abstraction	9/29/2019 12:35 PM
13	The river should be part of the identity of the town.	9/25/2019 7:31 AM
14	A real challenge is the built environment that probably can't be changed A river walk / cycle path from Oxhey Park up towards Tesco's & on into town centre would be great but probably impossible because of what is built to the river bank	9/25/2019 7:01 AM
15	I would really appreciate any information on a safe fishing environment on the River Colne.	9/24/2019 10:53 PM
16	Maybe some mobile snack vans and publicity around the town	9/24/2019 6:39 PM
17	It's a major part of Watford and the Colne Valley is a hugely valuable and unique amenity and ecological treasure of regional importance	9/21/2019 8:33 PM
18	Invasive non-native species,such as American signal crayfish should be removed. Traditional fish should be encouraged, sticklebacks, minnows, gudgeon, roach, dace, chub, barbel etc. By both stocking and improving spawning areas.	9/21/2019 12:29 PM
19	As a child in Watford, the river had a bit more drama as there was more water in it and the flow was faster, was possible to run a boat in some stretches and swim in others. It is more of a stream now and lacking in dynamism	9/21/2019 12:30 AM
20	Please sort out the sewage apparently entering the river I think it might be where the M1 link Rd crosses the river a little upstream from Water Lane.	9/20/2019 10:06 AM

## Rediscovering the River Colne 2019

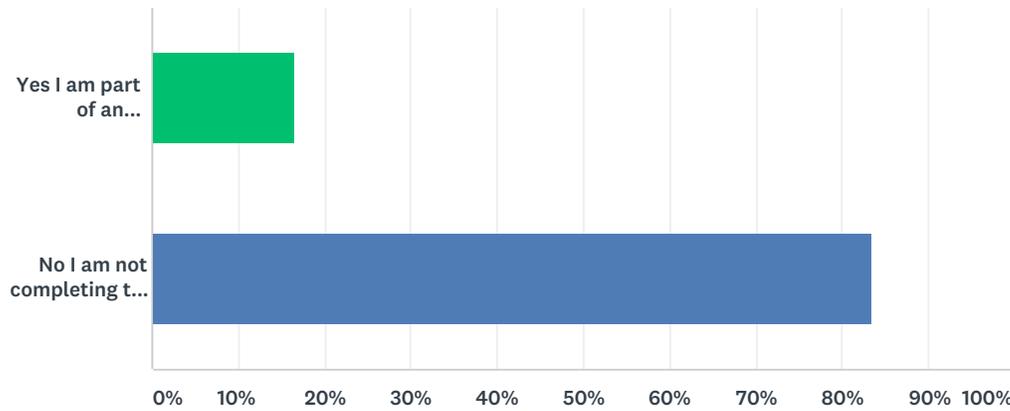
21	I am very excited by this project. Growing up in the area the "canal" in Oxhey Park was an eye sore and certainly not pleasant, and pretty much inaccessible. I often compared Watford with Hemel Hempstead's Gade River, which really enhances their town centre. In contrast the Colne in Watford was like a sewer and dump, shrouded in overgrowth and fenced off. Worse still when Dalton Way was built it encroached on the river bank near the Arches spoiling the peace and tranquility of that section of the Park. The foot bridge and associated paths has been fantastic, providing a lovely route to the shops and cycle way. I suggest using the new construction along the river in the park to do some more environmental education and promotion about the river, and extend this work downstream along the southern river bank in Riverwell Recreation Ground connecting up to the new park on the other (north) side.	9/20/2019 9:11 AM
22	Really pleased something is finally being done. Thank you.	9/19/2019 11:39 PM
23	The Colne has not always been, and is still isn't easily accessible in places, perhaps because, apart from Oxhey Park, its path does not run through what we would call open countryside. It's banks are more often that not overgrown and it meanders through industrial areas where you wouldn't normally walk. As a child in the 50s/60s, the river was accessible from the Ebury Way to Hamper Mill, but that has now all been fenced off.	9/19/2019 10:40 AM
24	I love the river and really impressed with water clarity and wildlife.	9/18/2019 11:11 PM
25	water quality in the stretch from the flyover road bridge from town centre to tescos is very poor, plus litter problems. Have reported water quality problems to EA on a number of occasions with no apparent improvement	9/17/2019 10:54 PM
26	Tracks sometimes become very muddy. Some people cycle too fast.	9/17/2019 2:00 PM
27	Please see my preceding comments.	9/17/2019 1:32 PM
28	A special river that cannot be allowed to go the same way as others in the north of the county and just run dry. Reduce the current the level of extraction or lose it forever so flat dwellers from London can through their kfc wrappers in the ditch.	9/16/2019 10:20 PM
29	I would like to see this idea along the length of the colne from watford into rickmansworth and mill end	9/16/2019 9:50 PM
30	I think it is a very good idea to improve the use of the river corridor as it would help many people get out in the fresh air to exercise and become healthier. The Watford Green Gym work along the River Colne and have kept the parts they work in clear of weeds and debris for a long time now. They are doing a fine a job wherever they work to encourage people to join them in pursuing a healthy activity.	9/16/2019 3:40 PM
31	The water levels through Oxhey Park seem to have dropped drastically over the past ten years or so - possibly due to a dam that appears to have been built.	9/15/2019 12:27 PM
32	It's an underused resource because of the state of the habitat	9/14/2019 10:48 PM
33	Definitely think the stretch along Tesco should be cleaned and improved- would be a great joy to see	9/14/2019 2:22 PM
34	At 53 years old, brought up in Watford and now run a film business in the town, so a very frequent visitor, it's always felt to me that the Colne isn't part of the town's DNA. Admittedly, the river isn't grand like the Thames and, unlike London, for example, it's a bit 'to one side', but in these 'ecological and historical aware' times, the Colne is ripe for a popular facelift. Watford is 'on the up' and the more accessible a tranquil river is, the better. A foil to the Watford bustle. After all, it's a naturally occurring resource that's very Watford, linking us to nature, history and other places along the banks of the river.	9/14/2019 11:08 AM
35	I go fishing a lot on the canal and It would be lovely to be able to go other places for fishing	9/14/2019 12:58 AM
36	Riverside walks are very satisfying, following the path (where there is one) and noting how the flow widens or narrows gradually according to which way you are going. Another well advertised riverside route, more in scale to the Colne than the Thames, is the Wandle Trail.	9/13/2019 11:37 PM
37	Have to strike a careful balance between people and nature using the river	9/13/2019 6:18 PM
38	The river would benefit from better water quality. The reduction of misconnected drainage through public education and enforcement against professionals would help. Reduction of diffuse pollution by treatment of road and car park runoff would also help. Public events to raise awareness of the river would help.	9/13/2019 3:43 PM

## Rediscovering the River Colne 2019

39	I worked with the council and an artist on the creation of the Colne public art. That was great fun and really popular with local people as it created connection to the river, art and heritage. Would be delighted to support this project and being so close by at Watford Museum help in anyway we can	9/13/2019 3:10 PM
40	It needs to be accessible to all, so those in wheelchairs or with mobility issues. The water needs to be safe for skin contact and for the reintroduction of wildlife	9/13/2019 12:29 PM
41	.... it is a beautiful stretch in its own right - just needs more tlc	9/12/2019 10:06 PM
42	I regard the Colne as a pleasant part of the local landscape which works best with minimal involvement. It appears to be clean and attractive and effort should be made to keep it so.	9/12/2019 9:42 PM
43	More publicity to get people to use the river and learn about our natural environment	9/12/2019 7:11 PM
44	no	9/12/2019 5:01 PM
45	No	9/12/2019 3:12 PM
46	The accessible stretches eg Oxhey Park aren't very attractive or inspiring and the more attractive stretches (Radlett Road recreation area ) are particularly accessible or inviting.	9/12/2019 2:53 PM
47	Some parts are nicer than others.	9/12/2019 1:58 PM
48	N/A	9/12/2019 1:34 PM
49	Watford needs to ensure they encourage not just commercialisation in housing and business development but encourage a more social side to the natural environment that exists.	9/12/2019 1:33 PM
50	It's the only place in the UK I have ever seen Kingfishers.	9/12/2019 1:17 PM
51	It would be great to see the river more accessible and visually appealing, particularly through the more urban sections in Watford. I know that these areas are part of a flood alleviation scheme brought in about 25 years ago, and it's in an urban setting, so naturally there's an element of over-engineering going on, but efforts to improve this with softer, more natural solutions would be well spent. These are also the sections that are seen by the majority of people in Watford and visiting Watford. The sections along Stephenson Way always look appealing, but you've got a high speed link road coming by, which may deter people from using it as a recreational route.	9/12/2019 1:16 PM
52	I think that the river banks need to be cleared and landscaped to improve the areas and access. Also the work that is being carried out to the river in Oxhey Park looks a mess and is completely opposite to the dredging of the river, which was carried out recently to prevent flooding. The water level seems to have dropped over recent years too. The area along Riverside needs to be cleared and landscaped. Many years ago it was deep enough and wide enough for swimming and boating. That can't happen now at any point along the river.	9/12/2019 12:35 PM
53	Do something about the horrible Riverwell development plans in West Watford which will destroy the peaceful part of the river - and negatively impact the river colne forever.	9/11/2019 9:45 PM
54	STOP the Riverwell development which will DESTROY the River Colne and the river corridor for everyone - especially residents in densely over populated West Watford.	9/11/2019 1:36 PM

### Q14 If you are completing the survey as an organisation, please check the box here.

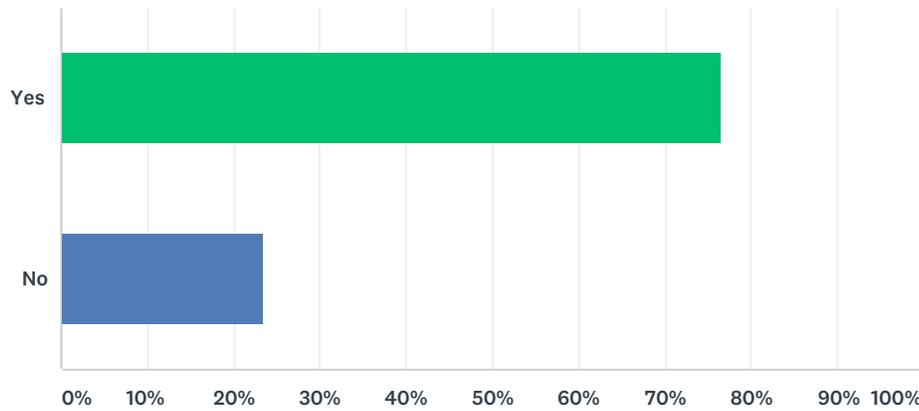
Answered: 109 Skipped: 23



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes I am part of an organisation	16.51%	18
No I am not completing this on behalf of an organisation	83.49%	91
TOTAL		109

## Q15 Would you be interested in receiving more information about this meeting?

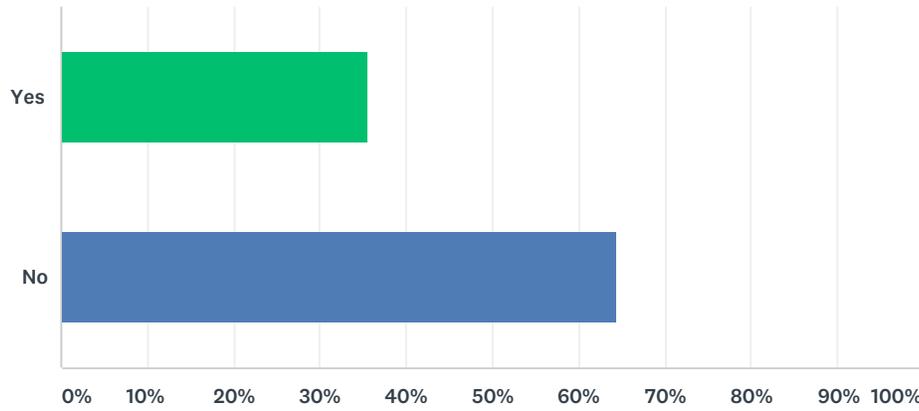
Answered: 17 Skipped: 115



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	76.47%	13
No	23.53%	4
TOTAL		17

## Q17 Would you like to volunteer to improve the River Colne?

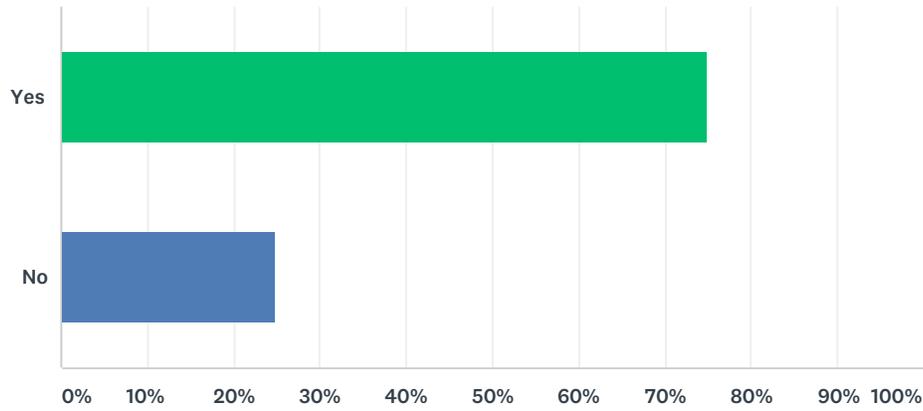
Answered: 90 Skipped: 42



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	35.56%	32
No	64.44%	58
TOTAL		90

## Q19 Are you a Watford resident?

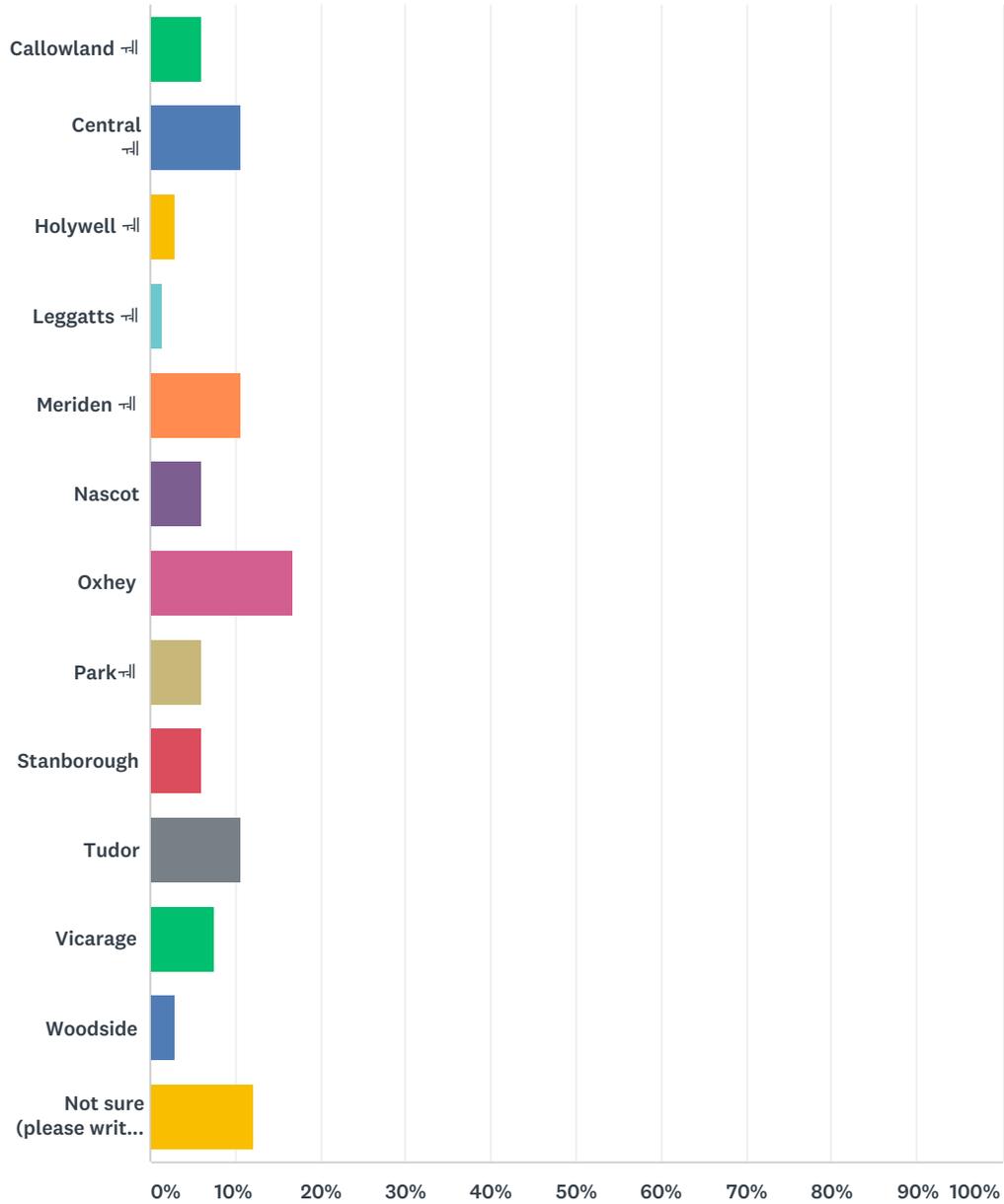
Answered: 88 Skipped: 44



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	75.00%	66
No	25.00%	22
TOTAL		88

## Q20 Which ward do you live in?

Answered: 66 Skipped: 66



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Callowland	6.06%	4
Central	10.61%	7
Holywell	3.03%	2
Leggatts	1.52%	1
Meriden	10.61%	7
Nascot	6.06%	4

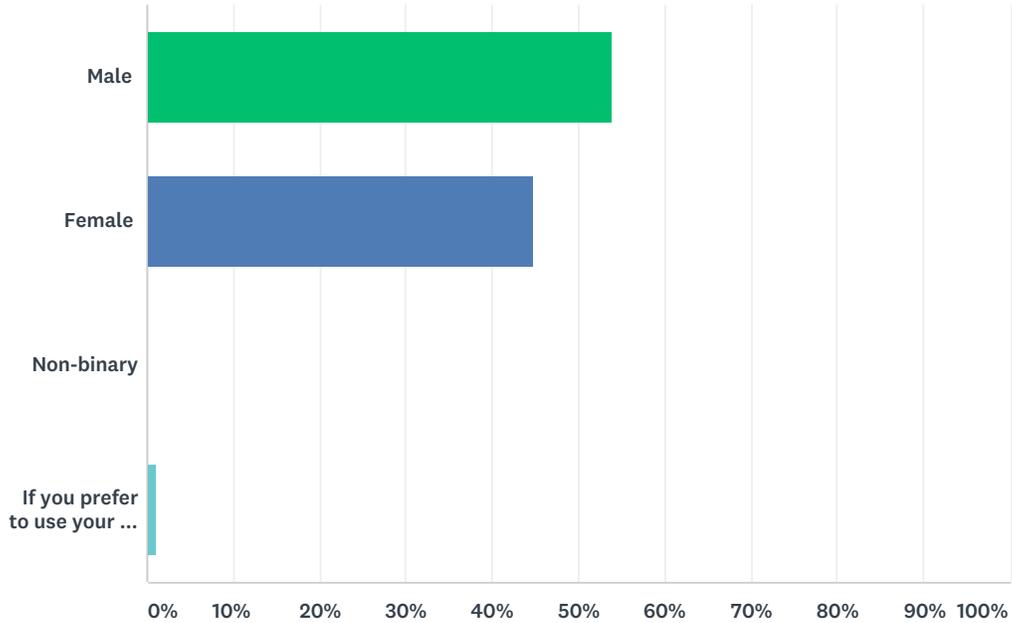
## Rediscovering the River Colne 2019

Oxhey	16.67%	11
Park Hall	6.06%	4
Stanborough	6.06%	4
Tudor	10.61%	7
Vicarage	7.58%	5
Woodside	3.03%	2
Not sure (please write in your postcode)	12.12%	8
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>66</b>

#	NOT SURE (PLEASE WRITE IN YOUR POSTCODE)	DATE
1	WD234QP	10/4/2019 8:16 PM
2	WD25 9AR	9/26/2019 4:38 PM
3	WD18 7QQ	9/25/2019 7:49 AM
4	wd24 5jl	9/25/2019 7:05 AM
5	Vicarage	9/20/2019 10:08 AM
6	WD24 5GN	9/14/2019 12:59 AM
7	WD25 0AH	9/12/2019 1:52 PM
8	wd259ru	9/12/2019 1:18 PM

## Q21 Are you...

Answered: 87 Skipped: 45

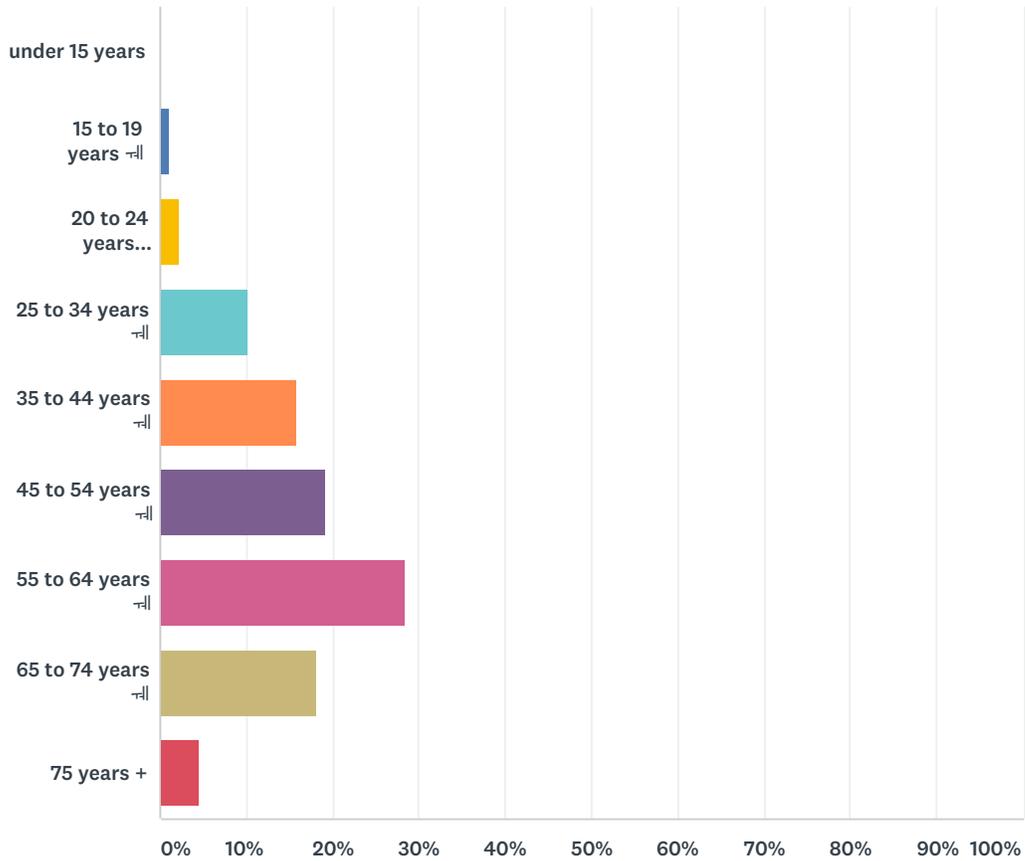


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES
Male	54.02% 47
Female	44.83% 39
Non-binary	0.00% 0
If you prefer to use your own term, please specify here:	1.15% 1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>87</b>

#	IF YOU PREFER TO USE YOUR OWN TERM, PLEASE SPECIFY HERE:	DATE
1	Physically I am 61 but identify as a 25-year old	10/4/2019 9:03 PM

## Q22 Your age – please indicate your current age group:

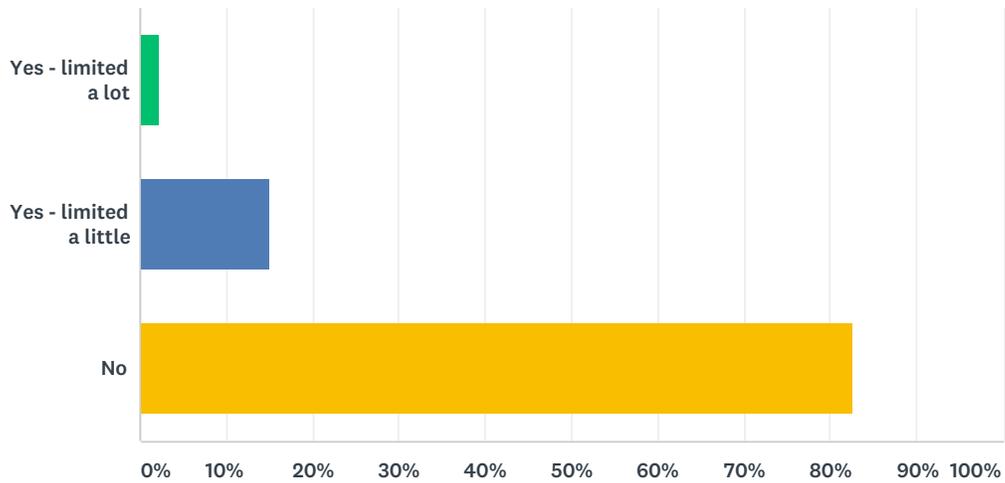
Answered: 88 Skipped: 44



ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
under 15 years	0.00%	0
15 to 19 years	1.14%	1
20 to 24 years	2.27%	2
25 to 34 years	10.23%	9
35 to 44 years	15.91%	14
45 to 54 years	19.32%	17
55 to 64 years	28.41%	25
65 to 74 years	18.18%	16
75 years +	4.55%	4
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>88</b>

### Q23 Are your day-to-day activities limited because of a health problem or disability which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months?

Answered: 86 Skipped: 46

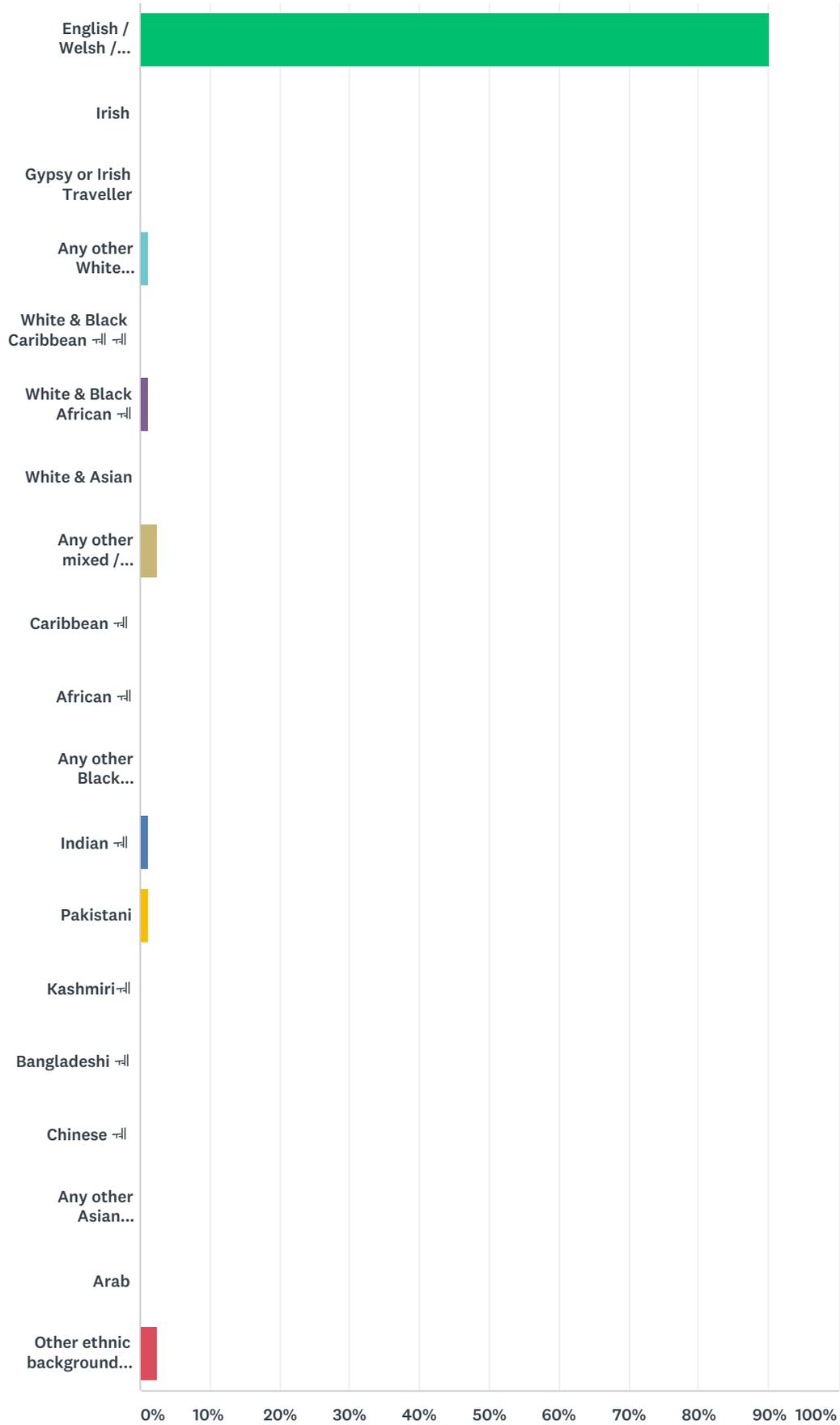


ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes - limited a lot	2.33%	2
Yes - limited a little	15.12%	13
No	82.56%	71
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>86</b>

## Q24 To which of these groups do you consider you belong?

Answered: 81 Skipped: 51

# Rediscovering the River Colne 2019



ANSWER CHOICES

RESPONSES

## Rediscovering the River Colne 2019

English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British	90.12%	73
Irish	0.00%	0
Gypsy or Irish Traveller	0.00%	0
Any other White background (please write in below)	1.23%	1
White & Black Caribbean $\rightarrow$	0.00%	0
White & Black African $\rightarrow$	1.23%	1
White & Asian	0.00%	0
Any other mixed / multiple ethnic background (please write in below)	2.47%	2
Caribbean $\rightarrow$	0.00%	0
African $\rightarrow$	0.00%	0
Any other Black background (please write in below) $\rightarrow$	0.00%	0
Indian $\rightarrow$	1.23%	1
Pakistani	1.23%	1
Kashmiri $\rightarrow$	0.00%	0
Bangladeshi $\rightarrow$	0.00%	0
Chinese $\rightarrow$	0.00%	0
Any other Asian background (please write in below)	0.00%	0
Arab	0.00%	0
Other ethnic background (please write in below) $\rightarrow$	2.47%	2
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>81</b>

# Summary report

## Rediscovering the River Colne

September 2020



Presented by  
The Colne Catchment Action Network



This plan summarises the work of Groundwork South, Groundwork East, Connections Community Interest Company, the Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust and the Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative



## Rediscovering the River Colne Summary report

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1. Executive summary
  2. Introduction
    - Background & scope
  3. Summary of proposed works
    - Brief descriptions of all elements
    - Costs
    - Priorities
  4. Summary of funding strategy
    - Summary of proposed approach to fundraising supported by key actions
- 

### 1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Colne Catchment Action Network is advising Watford Borough Council (WBC) on the 'Rediscovering the River Colne' project which, over a decade, will reestablish the River Colne as a community asset for Watford Town. It is more than just an environmental improvement project – it is a large-scale project in which to bring benefits to all through increased activity, improved mental health, learning new skills for employment, improved understanding of the environment and our effect upon it whilst also being an effective response to the current nature and climate crises that are so inextricably linked.

Detailed scoping work has been undertaken (in 2019/2020) using the full breadth of skills across our multi-agency approach. This has resulted in a viable, costed and impactful approach, which is outlined in this report. Total identified works are costed at £2.8m with priorities for the first three years costed at £722,000. Early indications suggest that a number of external funders will be supportive of the work, with £100,000 identified to date, indicating there is support to deliver a legacy project that boasts community cohesion and biodiversity as key benefit areas.

This ten-year project is a huge opportunity for well-considered, focussed attention on the river and surrounding habitats, producing long lasting improvements of scale, supported by and engaging the whole community. As well as delivering WBCs vision to bring back the river to the heart of the town the partnership feels that a stretching biodiversity target should be to help prevent water voles from going extinct in the Colne Valley by establishing a thriving population by the end of the project.

Alongside WBC, delivery will only be possible through a partnership approach drawing on the knowledge, skills, enthusiasm and funding of a range of organisations and the local community. The alignment of the aspirations of this project with those of interested partners and funders, including links to the 'green recovery' in the short term, will be key to its success but the scale and variety of activity identified within the plan shows this is possible and a strength of the approach.

## 2. INTRODUCTION

The Watford Borough Council (WBC) ten-year project, 'Rediscovering the River Colne', is a ground-breaking project that aspires to bring the River Colne back into to the heart of Watford Town and its residents. It will see the river become an asset within the borough, contributing positively to the lives of local people and wildlife, increasing access, biodiversity and amenity value.

The project brief identified a perception that the river is in many parts dirty, inaccessible, unkempt and of low wildlife value. The project will provide sustainable solutions to the issues affecting the river and also seek to regenerate the public spaces it flows through. The intention is to provide a healthy riparian corridor, with clean water, diverse wildlife and low flood risk/water stress, that is accessible to all and of high amenity value. Improving access will enrich the visitor experience, encourage a sense of ownership and provide an oasis of calm in the urban environment. Community ownership, education and awareness are key principles which will underpin each activity delivered.

This project continues WBC's investment into improving their parks and open spaces, is referenced as a priority in the Mayor's manifesto and is embedded in WBC's corporate plan. The scheme brings together the aspirations of a number of different stakeholders including water companies, government agencies, charities, anglers, conservationists and, as it develops will engage local residents and businesses.

The first phase of development work, summarised in this report, to identify aspirations, opportunities, outline plans and costings has been delivered by ColneCAN, the Colne Catchment Action Network. Colne CAN is one of over a hundred catchment partnerships operating across the UK as part of The Catchment Based Approach policy framework launched by Defra in 2013. This link is likely to be useful regarding funding opportunities. It brings a wide variety of organisations to ensure catchment-wide thinking and local action. The partnership unites local stakeholders in achieving six aims for improving the river catchment to:

- control invasive species
- involve people with their local water-bodies
- improve wildlife corridors
- improve water quality
- manage flow
- work together.

As such it is an ideal body to assist WBC in its aspiration to improve the river through the town. This first stage of development of the project has involved Groundwork, the Colne Valley Fishery Consultative, Community Connections CIC and Herts & Middx Wildlife Trust.

## 2. SUMMARY OF PROPOSED WORKS

During 2019 and early 2020 work was undertaken to develop a strategy for the river and its surroundings through surveys, meetings, designs and cost estimates to identify the full scope all potential works to work to achieve the project goals. The potential outputs and outcomes are tabulated initially below, followed by the individual reports themselves of which WBC Parks Department has the full detail including text and supporting plans and costs. To be completed at a later stage is a report on maintenance costs.

Alongside this work, and crucial to the success of this project, has been the establishment of a water quality group comprising WBC, Environment Agency (EA) and the local water companies and facilitated by Groundwork.

Activity area	Output	Potential outcomes
<b>River Improvement</b>	Eight river improvement plans – focussed on the main recreational sites	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improved functioning river &amp; adjacent habitat management</li> <li>• Improved biodiversity including thriving water vole population</li> <li>• Reduction in flood risk</li> <li>• Removal of invasive non-native species</li> <li>• Reduced pollution</li> </ul>
<b>Landscape and access</b>	Report and action plan bringing together the river improvement plans above with landscape and access proposals	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Accessible river corridor</li> <li>• Improved river signage</li> <li>• Creation of destination areas</li> <li>• Creation of a heritage themed walk</li> <li>• Potential new river crossing</li> </ul>
<b>Environmental monitoring</b>	Report and programme proposal	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of a Citizen Science Network</li> <li>• User-led monitoring activity programme</li> <li>• Increased volunteering opportunities</li> <li>• New early warning for pollution incidents, water levels and invasive species</li> </ul>
<b>Engagement</b>	Report on the potential for a large scale community engagement programme	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased volunteering opportunities</li> <li>• Involvement of a wider range of the Watford community</li> <li>• Improved opportunities for health and wellbeing of residents</li> <li>• New education programmes and materials for schools</li> <li>• New arts and heritage projects</li> </ul>
<b>Funding</b>	Fundraising strategy & list of potential funders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased community and business engagement</li> <li>• Capacity building support for the local community</li> <li>• Diverse and sustainable funding</li> </ul>

## 2.1 River improvement plans

For each site detailed botanical and modular river surveys were completed by the project team. The eight reports then

- record the present situation including current land use, the river channel profile and course, floodplain and bank face habitats, river bed habitat substrate and flow type, any artificial structures, invasive species found, site ecology and reviews water quality
- propose relevant habitat improvement recommendations in text and map form
- present a site action plan with estimated costs

The level of detail in the research and assessment allows certainty as to the options identified, is at a sufficient level of detail to satisfy the EA as a regulator and potential funder and also, we hope will assist local planning authorities in developing policies for river environmental protection.

### Summary of issues

- The natural profile of the river has been modified overtime, resulting in the degradation of important in-stream habitats and a lack of connectivity with the floodplain.
- The artificially enlarged nature of the channel means that it is prone to severe low flow conditions, Climate change will have a profound impact on the river if no action is taken to combat this.
- A lack of habitat management has resulted in the river becoming shaded by trees. This has led to the decline of aquatic plant species and the degradation of important floodplain habitats, such as backwaters and wet woodlands.

- Historic structures such as weirs and mill races act as barriers to the movement of fish species, limiting habitat connectivity and the resilience of fish stocks in Watford.
- There are widespread issues of pollution from the many outfalls feeding into the river due to faulty surface water infrastructure.
- Invasive species including Himalayan Balsam, Japanese Knotweed and American Signal Crayfish are present throughout the river corridor and limit the diversity of native flora and fauna.

#### Opportunities

- Key is the creation of low flow channels – a narrowing of the channel to ensure the river continues to offer good habitat and geomorphology in times of low flow whilst still allowing the wider channel to be utilized for water storage during high flow events. This will help to future proof the river against the effects of climate change.
- Brush berms and flow deflectors to create a meandering effect in over straightened sections of river and to provide important bankside habitat for species such as water voles.
- River bed features such as riffles and pools to provide a range of flow types and improved habitat for fish spawning and invertebrate life.
- Improvements to existing constructed wetlands and the creation of new wetland features to improve floodplain habitat and reduce flood risk.
- The provision of refuge habitat, such as backwaters to shelter aquatic life from disturbances such as pollution or flood events.
- Management of overhanging trees and vegetation to allow more light into the water to increase the variety of native fauna and the aesthetic appeal of the river corridor.
- Smaller scale opportunities such as bat boxes, the eradication of invasive species and river clean ups.
- Opportunities to improve surface water infrastructure to prevent pollution from entering the river.

## 2.2 Landscape and access

### Summary of issues

- The network of green spaces of the river corridor provides an extensive, coherent green corridor through the town and an existing, access network but with poor signage and limited use
- Despite there being some areas of high wildlife and recreational value much of the area is little known, some sites are unimaginative with limited, uninviting access and interpretation and suffer from neglect and misuse
- The majority of use is by very local residents and there is little awareness of the path along the length of the river and links to the wider off-road networks such as the National Cycle Network, rights of way and into the town and surrounding neighbourhoods
- There is no signage or information showing the whole route encouraging wider exploration nor understanding of the areas that they are passing through

#### Opportunities

- To create a continuous, coherent, visible, accessible, signed route along the corridor following the course of the river as closely as possible
- Provide a coherent signage strategy with a hierarchy for site signage, route signage and interpretation. Promoting the use of the new logo.
- The creation of destination areas along the route with seating, viewing platforms and hides as appropriate

- Development of a heritage themed walk, art approach to the 'disconnect' between Tesco and Oxhey Park where the route deviates from the current river but follows the historic route
- Improve elements of furniture, signage and sections of the paths themselves
- Consider creating further access links to surrounding housing areas or a new river crossing from Riverside Park to Riverwell

### 2.3 Environmental monitoring report

This work has produced a full set of survey data on the condition of the river and its habitats and it is important that the conditions are monitored going forward. Not only does this allow an assessment to take place of the effectiveness of the interventions but also provides an opportunity to engage with the public on the issue. As such, the project is structured as a citizen science network (i.e. led by members of the public) to empower local people to take the lead on monitoring the ecological and geomorphological condition of the River Colne over time. It aims to:

- Engage, inspire and train local people and stakeholders to monitor the health of the River Colne
- Complement existing environmental monitoring work conducted by partner organisations locally and elsewhere in the Colne Catchment.
- Collect relevant, useful data that will be used to inform key stakeholders and deliver gains for the local environment
- Monitor the river's recovery over the 10-year duration of the project as habitat and water quality improvements are made

Key stakeholders and partners were consulted to understand what environmental monitoring is already conducted and then how this could be developed further. The report summarised current activity, the methodology, how it could be increased including timescale, coordination required and cost. Activities identified as appropriate to meet the above aims are as below although it is acknowledged that not all may be possible to deliver due to funding constraints. Key to the choice of approach will be the level of interest locally and the ability to include an increased number of volunteers from across the town either on one-off events or taking a longer-term commitment:

- Riverfly monitoring – an early and reliable indicator of water quality and pollution issues. Already being run and simple to expand on with the Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative being the designated Riverfly Coordinator for the area. Aim to increase the number of sites being surveyed and the number of volunteers involved
- Outfall safari – outfalls can be a source of chronic pollution in urban rivers. Outfall safari is a citizen science methodology to locate, assess the impact of and report polluted surface water outfalls. The report proposes to comprehensively map and assess all polluting outfalls in the project area with the first survey being completed by staff members before volunteers are brought on board.
- Water chemical analysis – important to identify changes that are not detectable by eye. The report proposes a partnership project with Thames Water to establish a volunteer led water sampling programme. A key element will be to assess the levels of ammonia and phosphate at six new monitoring sites
- Geomorphological surveys – to study habitat diversity, physical habitat and hydro-morphological functioning of the river and its margins and is recognised by statutory bodies and is the format of the river restoration reports
- Non-native invasive plant species – establish a robust monitoring and mapping process to identify sites and identify treatment approaches
- Dragonfly and damselfly monitoring – an important indicator of ecological balance. The aim is for the first comprehensive survey to take place.

- Fish populations – to complement the citizen science monitoring activities the Environment Agency has extended its fish populations surveys in Watford from one to three sites. Volunteer citizen scientists will be invited to observe the surveys and access the results.

## 2.4 Engagement plan

The aim of this activity is that through the community engagement plan the river corridor will be brought into the heart of the community through a programme of volunteer days, events, information and tailored communications, enabling local people to become actively involved in and stewards of their environment. The projects role in linking people to activities as part of the green recovery from Covid19 will be a key opportunity.

A community and organisation focused survey was created to ascertain current river Colne uses, events and activities that are being run, people's views on additional events/activities, current issues preventing people using the Colne and whether people would be willing to volunteer in the future. 131 responses were received and following assessment of this information a meeting was run to discuss opportunities in more detail. Further meetings were then held with specific groups including Watford Museum, Veolia, art groups, existing 'Friends' and resident groups. A list was also collated of businesses within 150m of the Colne to allow an approach to be made to them in the future.

From this work the following themes for activity were identified:

- Arts and heritage
- Education
- Health and wellbeing
- Public outreach
- Volunteering & conservation

A three-year plan of potential activity has been developed following an excellent, varied response to the research. The activity will be delivered by a range of the partners and groups that responded but to make the most of the opportunity it is recommended that a part time officer role be recruited to co-ordinate this work, promote the opportunities fully and also to encourage engagement from more currently under represented and harder to reach groups.

First year project priorities include:

- Developing an annual programme of events and activities, run by partners and actively promoted
- Friends group establishment
- A community river festival
- A history of the Colne event
- River workshops
- Historic Watford Colne walks/wider route walks – web based
- School activity coordination
- Watford-wide sustainability and water saving and quality messaging programme – to align with water company aspirations

## 2.5 Total costs

All costs identified are plus VAT at the prevailing rate. The treatment of VAT will need considering depending on the source of the funding secured. Estimates for physical works are the worst-case scenarios based on the likelihood that all materials will be contaminated and removed from site.

**Total estimated cost for all activity over ten years is £2,802,000**

### River improvement and landscape & access works

Site	Signage	Route impr/creation	Other landscape/ furniture/ misc.	Art	River works	Total
Knutsford	9,250	15,750	8,750	15,000	92,450	<b>141,200</b>
Timberlake	7,500	12,000	23,250	0	278,300	<b>321,050</b>
Radlett Road	7,500	26,500	3,750	0	497,800	<b>535,550</b>
Waterfields	8,000	12,000	0	0	125,000	<b>150,000</b>
Tesco/disconnect	12,000	36,000	0	50,000	1,500	<b>99,500</b>
Oxhey Park	8,000	12,000	5,000	20,000	20,600	<b>65,600</b>
Riverside Rd/Pk	5,500	310,000	3,500	0	69,500	<b>388,500</b>
Lairage Land	4,000	20,000	500	0	164,500	<b>189,000</b>
<b>Total build</b>	<b>61,750</b>	<b>444,250</b>	<b>44,750</b>	<b>90,000</b>	<b>1,249,650</b>	<b>1,890,400</b>
Contingency 10%						<b>189,040</b>
Fees est 15%						<b>283,560</b>
Inflation						<b>56,712</b>
<b>TOTAL COST</b>						<b>2,419,712</b>

### Environmental monitoring

To deliver all elements of monitoring identified within the report for ten years including the water quality forum and report will cost: **£240,000**

### Engagement

The costs are based on employment of the part time officer via a community partner supported by a capital fund to support activity by all partners. Three years of employment and activity is identified after which it is anticipated that the programme will be well established and can be delivered via the Friends Group and WBC with capital supported by WBC and local fundraising. Cost for three years: **£142,500**

## 2.6 Identification of Improvement Priorities for first three years

Priorities have been identified by considering which works and activities best meet WBC and the Mayors priorities as identified in the original brief. Also considered has been the practicality of work and opportunities for funding in the near future including the potential Green Recovery Fund which will be launched soon.

Clearly WBC, central Government and potential funders priorities will change over time. Also, the detail of potential work may change as the next stage of designs are undertaken. As such the priorities should be regularly reassessed and the action plan updated in the light of these changes.

Indicative costs below include 15% fees and 10% contingency and inflation but are still exclusive of VAT. Costs are also only relevant if the full chosen works are implemented as the scale brings certain savings. If elements are removed then costs will need adjusting.

**Total cost of priorities for the first three years is £721,500**

Access & signage – to meet the priority of the Mayors manifesto signage of the whole route and initial physical work to ensure an accessible route exists along the whole route. Also, development work on the disconnect section including heritage/art elements **COST: £90,000**

River restoration work – due to the close proximity of work and closely linked environmental outputs the four most northerly sites are identified as the priority for action– Knutsford, Timberlake, Radlett Road and Waterfields. This would include – 2 stage channel and wooded debris installation, wetland scrapes, backwater restoration, marginal berms and tree works as required per site. Design and permitting would take place in 2021-22 with delivery taking place in 2022-23. **COST: £355,000**  
**£100,000 has already been indicated towards these works via EA and Affinity Water providing that WBC can provide match funding.**

Community engagement – 50% post and funds to - create a Friends group and culmination in river festival in year 1 alongside an activity programme run by a range of local Watford groups and organisations; Year 2 & 3 support/grow existing interest from schools, develop engagement programme with local businesses, widen the spread of engagement with hard to reach groups, management of larger programme of engagement **COST: £143,000**

Environmental monitoring – to run all proposed works over the first 3 years including the Watford Water Quality Forum **COST: £133,500**

### 3. SUMMARY OF FUNDING STRATEGY

Fundamentally the work planned across the Rediscovering the River Colne project is environmental in nature, including both physical improvements and also community engagement, stewardship, care and use all of which are essential to the success and sustainability of the project. The diverse range of activities planned provides a wider range of potential funding sources than might traditionally have been available to a “purely environmental” project. This can include funds focussed on: education and training, working with marginalised or vulnerable groups, health and wellbeing etc. Creativity will be key and a clear alignment with a range of agenda across the public and private sector required. Opportunities will often come up with short timescales for action and it is important that the funding plan is dynamic, agile and flexible to meet needs and opportunities as they arise. The project should benefit greatly from the range of partners involved who bring the skills, knowledge and resources to make the most of a wide range of opportunities.

£100,000 has already been pledged to the project from partners, as long as it can be matched by WBC, which shows the level of interest that already exists before the plan has begun to be promoted.

A list of funding opportunities has been developed and can be utilised by all project partners throughout the project as and when projects and funding opportunities arise. The pandemic will clearly have an effect on the funds available in the near future but should also provide opportunities as we align the priorities of this project to the Government’s green recovery proposals.

The funders list initially identifies the larger potential funders for which a plan should be developed for the short term. This includes:

- DEFRA/Environment Agency – the Green Recovery Challenge Fund is expected to be announced in September 2020 with a very short application window and this project is likely to be a close fit to what is required – strong partnership, plans well developed etc. It will also be important to build on the existing links with EA to secure additional funding on top of the £50,000 agreed to date
- Water companies - as well as consideration of specific project bids for support, the companies should be approached at a senior level for wider support of the whole project for a number of years. Possibly via a presentation to be made by the Mayor alongside project partners. Both water companies have already expressed their interest in the project with Affinity Water identifying £50,000 potential funding for 2021-22 financial year
- WBC
  - internal bids for support are planned for September 2020 and this support will be needed to release the support of other partners such as the Environment Agency and the water companies.
  - A review of any unspent/unallocated S106/CIL funds should take place and approaches made to Hertfordshire County Council and potentially adjoining local authorities to identify any opportunities.
  - Key for the success of the project is the need for the project to be high in the awareness of all departments of the Council but particularly the planning department at WBC to identify opportunities for S106/CIL and also biodiversity net gain within new developments. A presentation by the partners could be held to support this if required.
- Lottery – a meeting with Lottery is proposed to discuss how they feel the project best fits their new funding opportunities. There has recently been an advance indication of a Green Recovery Fund via Lottery to which a bid could be made during September if felt appropriate.

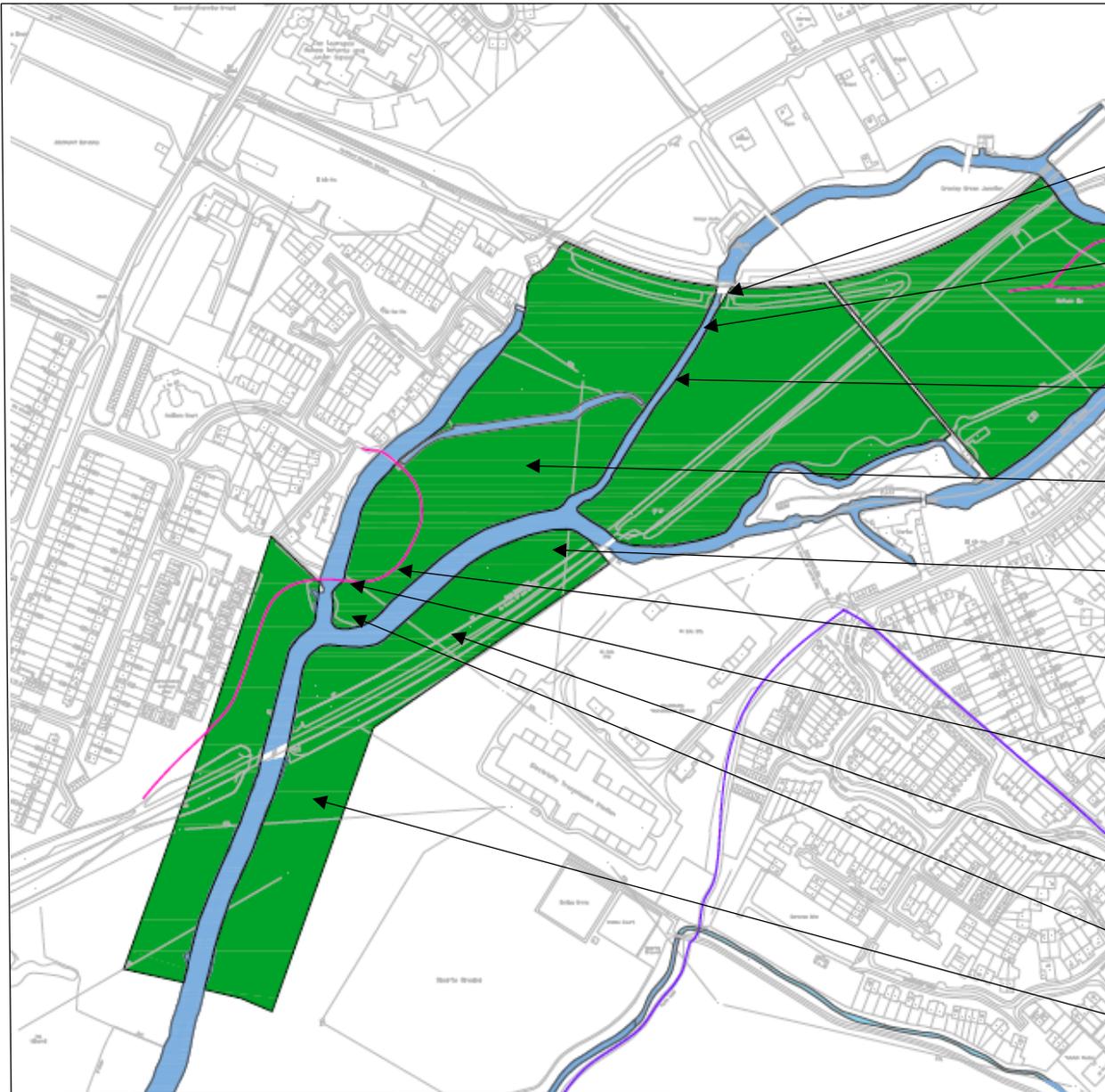
Following this initial activity other bids to national Trusts and organisations should be planned and then, as the project gains recognition locally, the smaller, local funds on the list will open up and the active community engagement and role of the Friends Group will become more important to front these alongside other partners.

Also identified in the funding strategy are non-financial opportunities for support including corporate engagement including building on the successful relationships that exist with companies such as Veolia.



## KNUTSFORD PLAYING FIELDS & LAND TO THE NORTH

- K1 Add biodiversity information panel to bridge to augment user experience (Nature/Heritage Trail point 1)
- K2 Remove damaged railings and replace with appropriate boundary treatment on south side of Bushey Mill Lane that leads towards bridge
- RRP Formalise grazing & increase botanical diversity
- North Entrance
- K3 Formalise entrance with Colne Riverside Walk location board
- K4 Renovate existing carved signage by platform
- K5 Opportunity for community arts feature - continuation of Luke Perry Sculpture Series
- K6 Add crushed stone path from north entrance to circular area above jetty
- K7 Notice board (Rugby Club carpark)
- Destination area
- K8 Interpretation board re heritage and biodiversity (Nature Trail point 2)
- K9 Installation of bench
- K10 Installation of waste bin
- K11 Widen path to reduce wear as well as lower sections of vegetation in order to view river
- K12 Maintain path and lower sections of vegetation
- K13 Provide new welcome signage - Colne Riverside Location Board
- K14 Provide safe crossing for walkers and cyclists by improving / implementing signage at key entrance points between green spaces eg add blind crossings



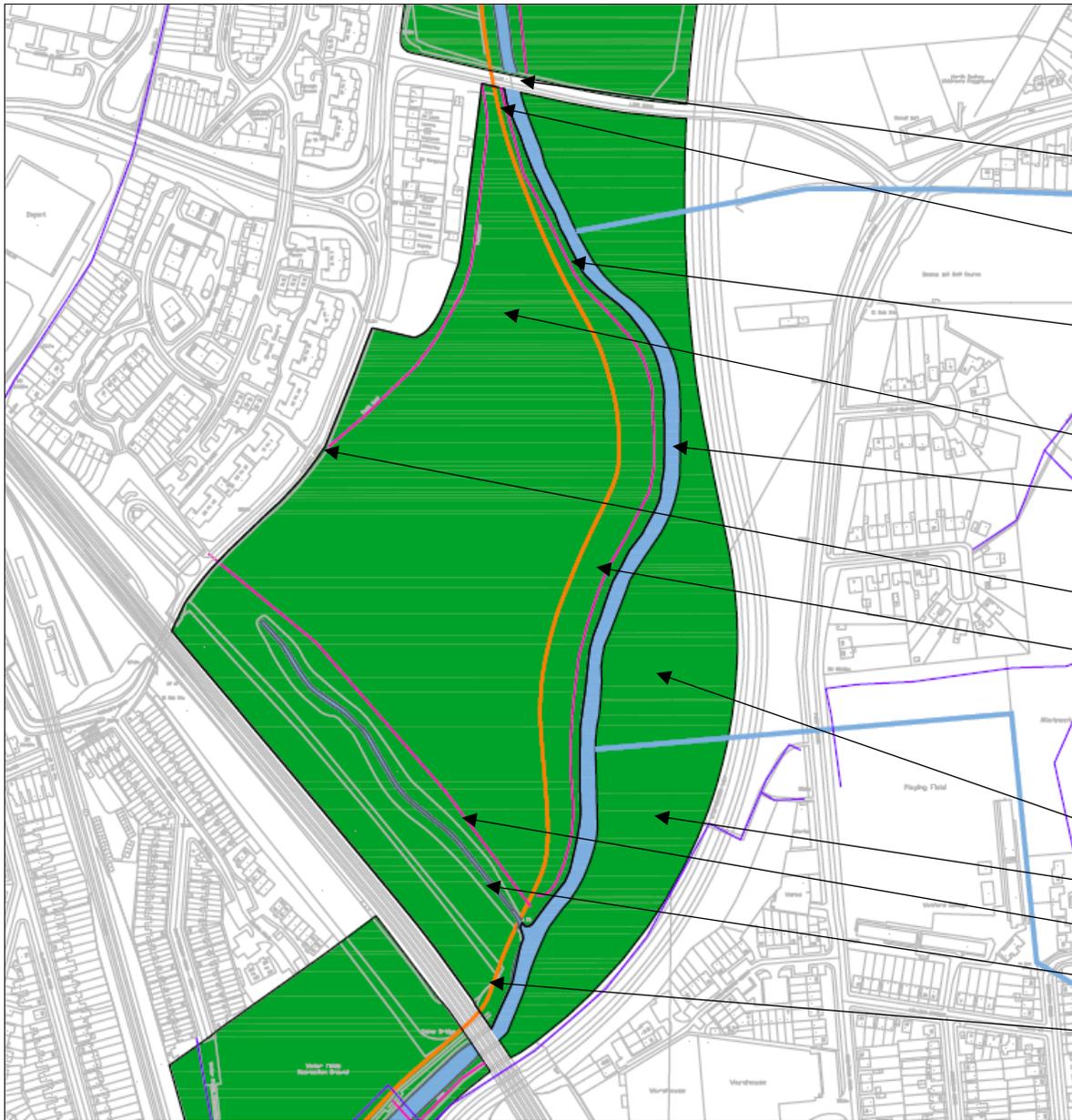
## LAIRAGE LAND

- RRP1 Remove revetment
- RRP2 River works including addition of wooded debris and willow scrub coppicing
- RRP3 Backwater / pond construction
- RRP4 Improved grassland management
- RRP5 Improved wet woodland management
- LL1 Add biodiversity information to augment user appreciation (Nature Trail point 14)
- LL2 Provide new signage - Colne Riverside Location Board at bridge crossing.
- LL3 Open up views to River Colne from Ebury Way
- LL4 Add footpath and bird hide
- RRP6 Improved woodland management



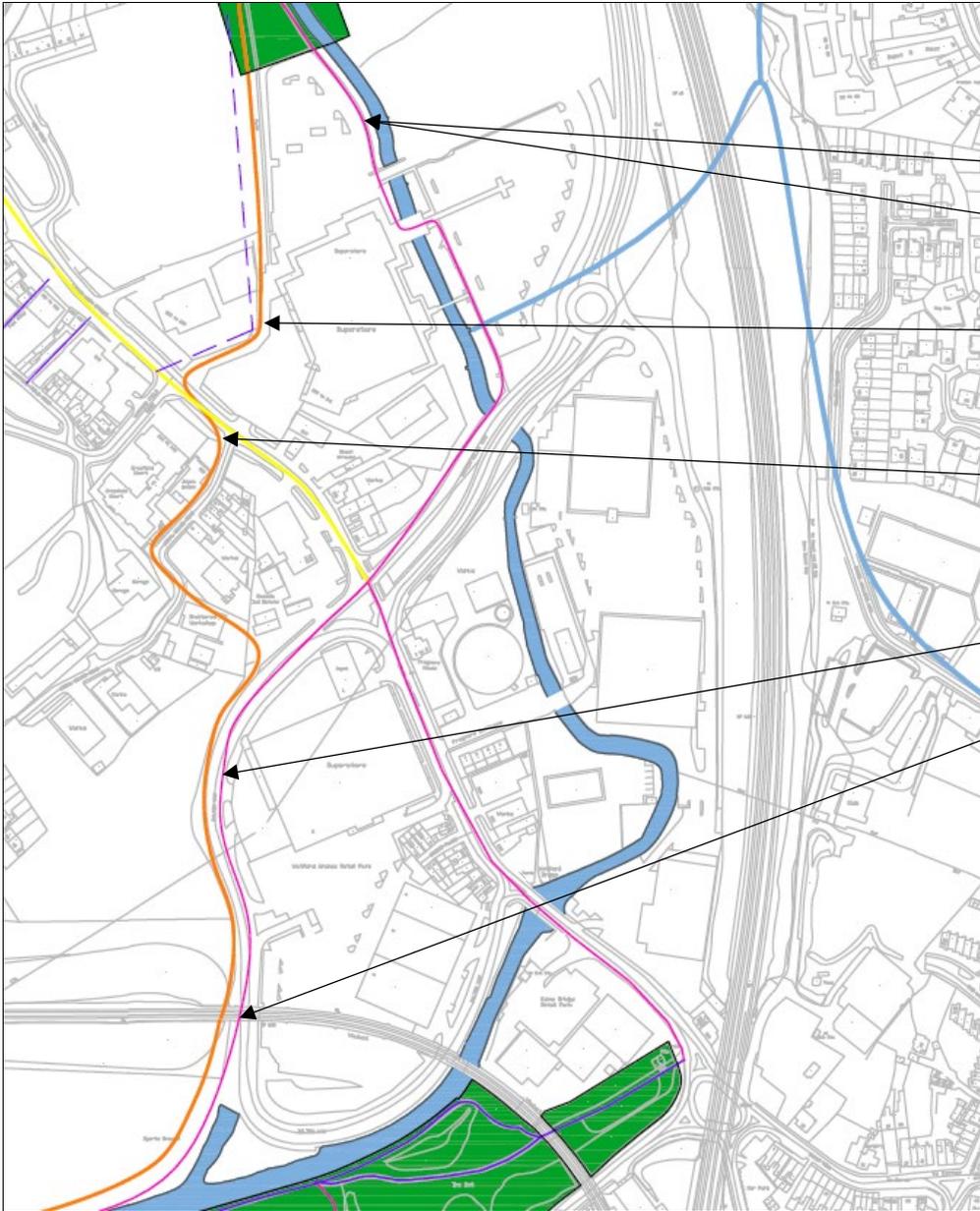
## OXHEY PARK

- RRP 1 Improve wet woodland
- O1 Add biodiversity interpretation board to augment user appreciation (Nature Trail point 12)
- O2 Provide new signage - Colne Riverside Location Board
- RRP 2 Woodland management
- O3 Opportunity for community arts feature - Continuation of Luke Perry Sculpture Series
- O4 Provide new signage - Colne Riverside Location Board
- O5 Renovate / repaint bridge with mural
- O6 Remove damaged railings near bridge and replace
- O7 Provide safe crossing for walkers and cyclists by improving / implementing signage at key entrance points between green spaces eg add blind crossings
- O8 Ensure route of signage of Ebury Way / National Cycle Path is sufficiently prominent



## RADLETT ROAD RECREATION GROUND

- RR1 Add biodiversity interpretation panel to bridge to augment user appreciation (Nature Trail point 5)
- RR2 Provide new welcome signage - Colne Riverside Location Board
- RR3 Riverside access - provide formalised 2 x stepped access point with hand rail between playing fields and river (north and midway)
- RRP1 Grassland enhancement
- RRP2 River works including tree coppicing, berm flow deflector installation, riparian habitat management and bat box installation
- RR4 Notice board on urban edge of park
- Designated viewing point
- RR5 Interpretation board re heritage and biodiversity at (Nature Trail point 6)
- RR6 Installation of bench plus lower vegetation
- RR7 Installation of waste bin
- RRP3 Restore historic backwaters
- RRP4 Enhance ditch network
- RR8 Add tarmac path from MUGA to riverside path
- RRP5 Enhance constructed wetland
- RR9 Provide new welcome signage - Colne Riverside Location Board



TESCO & DISCONNECT	
Tes1	Add biodiversity interpretation panel outside Tesco to augment user appreciation (Nature Trail point 9)
Tes2	Adjust bankside planting to waterside native vegetation to improve soil retention
Tes3	Provide safe crossing for walkers and cyclists by improving / implementing signage at key entrance points between spaces eg add blind crossings
D1	Improving signposting for heritage cycle path / alternative walking route along 'Hidden River' (Trail points 10 and 11)
D2	Create flowing art trail to identify route
D3	Provide safe crossing for walkers and cyclists by improving / implementing signage at key points eg add blind crossings (x4)



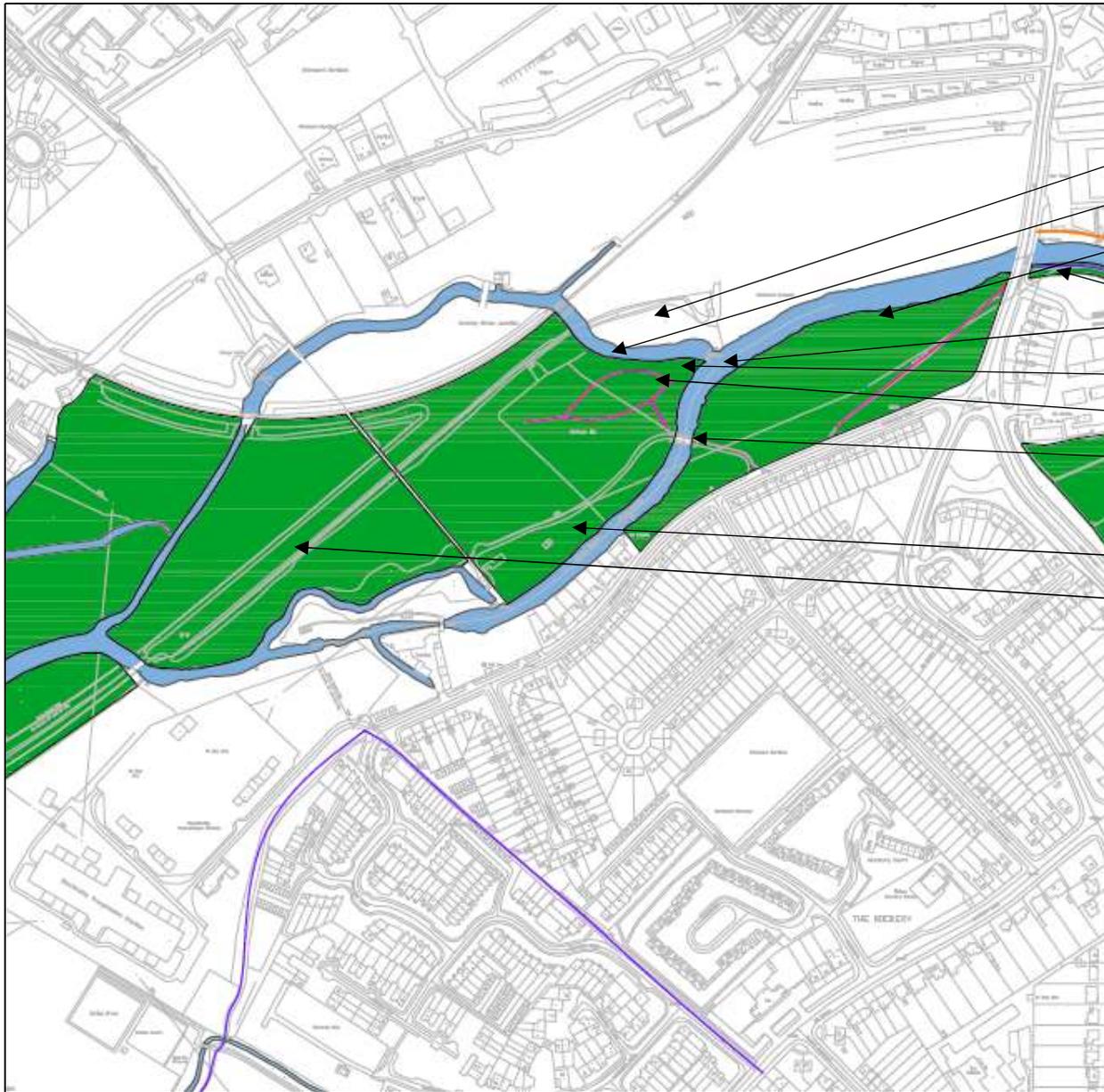
## TIMBERLAKE ALLOTMENTS

- TA1 Notice board (car park)
- TA2 Fingerpost at Timberlake Allotments car park to riverside path on opposite river bank.
- TA3 Add biodiversity interpretation panel to bridge to augment user appreciation (Nature Trail point 3)
- North entrance
- TA4 Renovation and replacement of fence and gate at entrance
- TA5 Colne Riverside Location Board
- Reedbeds
- TA6 Install fingerpost pointing to reedbed platform
- TA7 Installation of waste bin
- TA8 Install platform overlooking reedbeds
- TA9 Works to reedbeds
- TA10 Add biodiversity information panel on platform to augment user appreciation (Nature Trail point 4)
- RRP Backwater restoration and tree works
- TA11 Provide new welcome signage - Colne Riverside Location Board
- TA12 Provide safe crossing for walkers and cyclists by improving / implementing signage at key entrance points between green spaces eg add blind crossings



## WATERFIELDS RECREATION GROUND

- W1 Provide new signage - Colne Riverside Location Board
- W2 Notice board to urban edge of playing fields
- W3 Add biodiversity information panel to footbridge to augment user appreciation (Nature Trail point 7)
- RRP 1 River channel improvements
- RRP 2 Create pondscape
- W4 Provide new welcome signage - Colne Riverside Location Board
- W5 Potential to add under bridge mural
- W6 Add biodiversity interpretation panel on Water Lane to augment user appreciation (Nature Trail point 8) - Kingfishers
- W7 Provide safe crossing for walkers and cyclists by improving / implementing signage at key entrance points between green spaces eg add blind crossings
- RRP 3 Backwater and wet woodland works



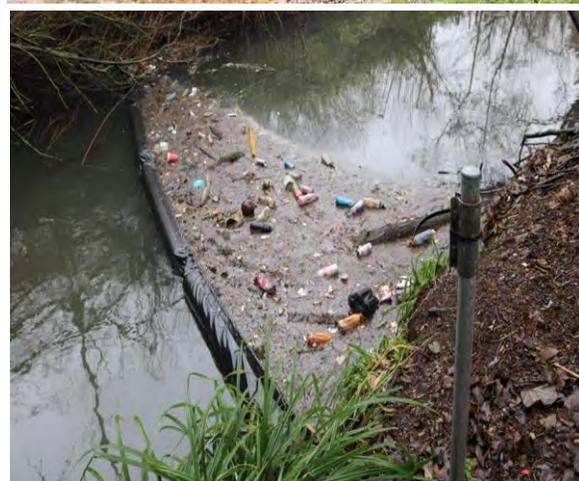
## RIVERSIDE RECREATION GROUND & PARK

- RRP 1 Pond creation
- Ri1 Potential bridge link to Riverwell
- Ri2 Upgrade/replacement of cycle footpath
- Ri3 Provide Colne Riverside Location Board
- RRP 2 Creation of fish passage
- Ri4 Add interpretation board at Tumbling Bay
- Ri5 Replacement of two benches
- Ri6 Add biodiversity information panel to bridge 'window' to augment user appreciation (Nature Trail point 13)
- RRP 3 Rotational coppice with brash used in berms
- Ri7 Open up views to River Colne from Ebury Way

# Landscape strategy & access improvement report

## Rediscovering the River Colne

### September 2020



Presented by  
The Colne Catchment Action Network





## The Colne Catchment Action Network

Affinity Water  
Bath Road Piscatorial Society  
Blenheim Angling Society  
British Airways  
British Airways Angling Society  
Bucks County Council  
Canal & Rivers Trust  
Chesham Town Council  
Chiltern District Council  
Chilterns Conservation Board  
Chilterns Chalk Stream Project  
Chiltern Society  
Colnbrook with Poyle Parish Council  
Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative  
Colne Valley Park CIC  
Dacorum Borough Council  
Dacorum Environmental Forum Water  
Group  
Eastcote Conservation Panel  
Egham & Staines Conservation Volunteers  
Environment Agency  
Friends of Colne Valley Park  
Friends of Gt Barn, Harmondsworth  
Friends of Pinn Meadows  
Friends of Stockers Lake  
Greater London Authority  
Groundwork East  
Groundwork South  
Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust  
Herts Countryside Management Project  
Herts County Council  
Impress the Chess  
Iver & District Countryside Association  
Iver Parish Council  
Landscape Futures  
London Borough of Hillingdon  
London Wildlife Trust  
Misbourne River Action  
River Chess Association  
Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead  
St Albans City & District Council  
Slough Borough Council  
South Bucks District Council  
Spelthorne Borough Council  
Spelthorne Natural History Society  
Thames Water  
Three Rivers District Council  
Uxbridge Rovers Angling & Conservation  
Society  
Ver Valley Society  
Watford Borough Council  
Wild Trout Trust  
Wraysbury Parish Council  
Zoological Society of London

### Rediscovering the River Colne Workstream 2 Delivery Partners:

This plan was produced by Groundwork East in partnership with Community Connections Community Interest Company and the Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.



# Rediscovering the River Colne

## Colne Landscape Strategy and Access Improvement Report

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#### 1. Introduction

- Background, vision & scope

#### 2. Project area/context

- Overview & context

#### 3. Current situation and analysis

- Methodology & analysis

#### 4. Recommendations/action plan

- **Landscape masterplan** summary of findings & recommendations including
  - Description of proposed improvements
  - Costings – in summary and detail in appendix H

#### 5. Appendices

- A: Location Map - provided electronically
- B: Environment Agency Flood Map - provided electronically
- C: Ownership Plan (Watford Borough Council) – provided electronically
- D: Challenges - provided electronically
- E: Existing Access and Interpretation - provided electronically
- F: Proposed Access and Interpretation - provided electronically
- G: Proposals sheets for all sites
- H: Action Plan

All appendices have been provided electronically to allow interrogation during project delivery.

Further supporting documents referred to in this report are seven river restoration plans for specific sites presented separately by Groundwork. Also produced for the wider project are reports on environmental monitoring, community engagement and funding opportunities. A summary report bringing all proposals together has also been produced to support communication and funding bids.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 PROJECT BACKGROUND

Watford Borough Council (WBC) is aiming to develop and deliver a ten-year strategic plan, “Rediscovering the River Colne”, to improve the river corridor for local people and wildlife within their administrative boundaries.

In Watford, it is easy to miss the River Colne altogether with its value as a natural asset largely unrecognised. There is a perception that the river is in many parts dirty, inaccessible, unkempt and of low wildlife value (WBC Project Brief River Colne Improvements, Watford on the Water Report September 2018). However, the river to the north and south of the district illustrates how a healthy river can enhance the environment and the lives of local people. From internationally rare chalk rivers in its rural headwaters to the gravel pits and reservoirs in the Colne Valley Regional Park, the Colne catchment possesses a rich and diverse range of waters and provides a wide range of opportunities for business and recreation as well as supplying water to meet public demand. Within Watford, the river links a number of key open spaces and could form a natural corridor for regeneration and improved environment. A positive contribution at a local town level will benefit the catchment as a whole.

Watford is characterised as an urban borough with approximately 80% of the area consisting of built up areas and urban green space (Local Plan 2020 – 2036). Significant residential, commercial and amenity development is being undertaken within Watford. Flooding and water scarcity have been identified as potential issues locally and WBC is keen to ensure that any development is sympathetic. Watford Riverwell, a major development in south Watford, recognised “the river as a crucial element in creating an environment that would benefit the wellbeing of this new community and the wider area”.

The Council has invested heavily in its programme to improve parks and open spaces including those the River Colne runs through. The programme was unable to incorporate the river itself and some of the issues affecting the river corridor are having a negative impact in the parks in particular litter in and around the river. In addition, there is poor accessibility to and along the river corridor. If resolved it would benefit both the immediate river corridor but also the wider parks and open spaces.

In his manifesto, the Elected Mayor of Watford identified improvements to parks, open spaces and leisure facilities in the borough as a mayoral priority. The Council seeks to do this by supporting the provision of new and extensive facilities at ‘Oxhey Park North’, introducing a London-style bike hire scheme and creating an improved riverside walk along the Colne River Valley.

“Improving and enhancing” the River Colne is also embedded in Watford Borough Council’s Corporate Plan to 2020.

The project brings together the aspirations of a number of different stakeholders including water companies, local authorities, businesses, government agencies, charities, anglers, conservationists and local residents. ColneCAN is proposing a bespoke collaborative approach to project delivery that utilises the skills of key partners in the Watford area. Integral to the project’s success is this delivery by organisations with the best knowledge of Watford’s ecology and local communities,

The project aims to assist local planning authorities in developing policies for river environmental protection. We encourage local planners to include policies to protect the River Colne’s water quality, biodiversity and landscape in addition to making provisions for access and recreation around the river corridor.

## 1.2 VISION AND AIMS

### Vision

For the river to be an asset within the borough, contributing positively to the lives of local people and wildlife. To create an improved riparian corridor and regenerated public spaces that the river flows through to provide a high-quality landscape for recreation, wildlife and conservation. For the project to help prevent water voles from going extinct in the Colne Valley by establishing a thriving population within Watford by the end of the project

### Aims

The Rediscovering the River Colne project will focus on three main areas

Environment (improvement & monitoring): build on the knowledge of key stakeholders to provide robust local improvement strategies and ensure that all work link into catchment-wide initiatives that contribute to improving the health of the entire river network.

Landscape and access: develop a comprehensive landscape improvement strategy along the length of the River Colne, increasing access and adding interpretation to enrich the experience of local people.

Engagement: provide and promote opportunities for all to participate and actively contribute to the outcomes of the project.

### 1.3 PROJECT SCOPE:

Over the next ten years the wider 'Rediscovering the River Colne' project will be delivered across five workstreams:

1. Environmental improvement project
2. Landscape strategy and access improvement project
3. Environmental monitoring project
4. Engagement project
5. Maintenance project

Specifically referenced within this report are:

#### **Workstream 1: Environmental Improvement Project**

The project provides a site-specific river corridor and habitat improvement strategy for seven sites within Watford. The report assesses the current state of these areas and makes recommendations for improvement. The results of this work are included within the action plan within this strategy.

#### **Workstream 2: Landscape Strategy and Access Improvement**

This report provides recommendations on landscape strategy and access/interpretation improvements to the River Colne along its length in the administrative boundary of Watford. In addition to sites identified in Workstream 1, a comprehensive approach is required to the full length of the river.

The costs within the report and the action plan at appendix H collate works identified in both workstreams into one summary and costs and additional detail to add future decisions.

Also established to support the aims of the project has been a water quality group consisting of Watford Borough Council, the Environment Agency, Thames Water and other partners.

## 2. PROJECT AREA

### 2.1 Overview

The River Colne rises from a subterranean river at a spring in North Mymms Park and covers an extended area from north of the M25 all the way to the Chilterns and for large swathes, is a bucolic rural waterway. It is one of only 200 chalk streams in the United Kingdom and is therefore very rare.

Watford lies in the Upper River Colne and tributaries catchment and the Colne is the principal river, entering the borough in the east and leaving the borough in the south.

### 2.2 Context

Watford is one of the most densely populated non-metropolitan districts in England, with a population of 96,700 (Office for National Statistics, 2019). It is a long established urban centre, with a market charter dating to the 12th century. The town has successfully diversified from traditional industries including printing and brewing, into an attractive and popular regional shopping and business centre and a focus for culture and recreation.

Watford is part of the London commuter belt and is strongly influenced by London. This brings benefits of a buoyant economy but also significant environmental pressures such as high levels of traffic congestion with pressure on land including the greenbelt, for development.

Biodiversity is a key consideration for development management, and planning policies, including Policy GI 3 of the Council's Core Strategy which states that "proposals must seek to conserve and enhance the unique natural landscape, biodiversity and habitat".

Although Watford is a highly urban borough, it maintains conditions for wildlife, including rare species, to thrive. Watford has 342 hectares of land covered by wildlife designation including 5 Local Nature Reserves, 2 air quality management areas (AQMAs), 2 areas of ancient woodland as well as numerous green spaces. The northern section of the River Colne was designated in 1997 as a Local Wildlife Site (LWS). In the southern section there are two LWS, 84/044/01 designated in 1997 and 84/025. designated in 2004 (Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust Watford Botanical and Bat Survey Report 2019).

The Water Framework Directive (WFD) sets a target for all rivers within the UK to have a 'good' ecological status or potential by 2027. In 2016 the section of the Colne that includes Watford was classified overall as 'moderate' with reasons for 'Not Achieving Good' identified as flow being affected by abstraction, point source pollution from sewage outfalls (both issues linked to the water industry) and physical modification through urban development and protection from flood. Chemical classification was identified as good and ecological classification as moderate.

The Colne on the south east boundary of Watford is in close proximity to the urban area but potential flooding issues are only identified at Lower High Street (see Appendix B). Potential future development in close proximity to the Colne could exacerbate existing pressures in the area, so identifying areas for wetland expansion as identified in this project may help alleviate this pressure.

Much of the areas adjacent to the river are owned by WBC although the most urban section is in multiple private ownership. (see Appendix C).

There are potential issues around contaminated land but locations have not been confirmed for this report.

### 3. CURRENT SITUATION

#### 3.1 Methodology

During the course of this study various methods have been used to identify issues pertinent to the successful execution of the project including stakeholder meetings, site visits and desk-based research. These methods have enabled the systematic identification of strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats.

#### 3.2 Analysis

Summary:

- The network of green spaces of the river corridor provides an extensive, coherent green corridor through the town and an existing, access network with poor signage and limited use
- Despite there being some areas of high wildlife and recreational value much of the area is little known, some sites are unimaginative with limited, uninviting access and interpretation and suffer from neglect and misuse
- There is widespread evidence of invasive non-native species although signs of its treatment are also visible
- Access
  - The majority of use is by very local residents and there is little awareness of the path along the length of the river and links to the wider off-road networks such as the National Cycle Network, rights of way and into the town and surrounding neighbourhoods
  - There is no signage or information showing the whole route encouraging wider exploration nor understanding of the areas that they are passing through
  - Many elements of furniture, signage and sections of the paths themselves require improvement
  - There are missing links that could be established or improved including paths to surrounding housing, a new river crossing and improved route along the 'disconnect' where the path no longer follows the river
- River
  - There are issues of over-widened channels with modified gradients resulting in slow flow which is resulting in habitat degradation over time. However, signs of recovery are seen on some sites
  - A lack of habitat management has resulted in over shading by trees in parts, resulting in a lack of floral diversity
  - Elements of recent modifications do not sufficiently/no longer link the floodplain with the river
  - There are widespread issues of pollution from the many outfalls feeding into the river

#### 3.3 Site detail – north to south

For detail relating to the river itself please see the seven river improvement plans – supporting documents. For plan presentation of detail and photographs of existing structures, conditions and wider issues see appendices D & E.

Sites are referenced by acronyms which are then used in later sections, proposal plans and the action plan.

K – Knutsford Playing Fields - north of Knutsford playing fields the area feels isolated and has been used by rough sleepers. The railings need replacement or renovation. The river banks are quite steep and not

particularly species rich. Stinging nettles are very common along with Himalayan Balsam and small patches of Japanese Knotweed are visible and require treating.

Knutsford playing fields consists of sports pitches which slope steeply on the eastern edge down to the river corridor. From the amenity area there are no views of the river but a viewing platform in the northern part of the site provides good access. The signs in this area are dilapidated and in need of renovation. From this area a narrow unsurfaced footpath that is at times muddy runs along the river with riverside vegetation very dense in places thus restricting views to the water. There has been a significant effort to eradicate Japanese Knotweed in several places.

TA - Timberlake Allotments - has a lit tarmac path leading from the carpark between the allotments and the western edge of the river. It is quite shaded in parts. On the opposite bank paths, gates and railings at the entrance to an open area are in poor repair. This area has a large pond which was created to store excess river water as part of the creation of the M1 link road. This wetland area shows limited signs of being visited and has had minimal maintenance over the twenty years since establishment resulting in minimally diverse habitats but important niches for wildlife. Works are required to ensure that the area does not dry out completely. Japanese Knotweed was noted in this area.

RR - Radlett Road Playing Fields - consists primarily of amenity grassland / sports pitches with an area of wildflower grassland in the north-west corner. To the south of the playing fields is a constructed wetland that drains to the river that was created to attenuate surface water run-off from the surrounding urban area. It also receives water from a Thames Water attenuation tank and is the source of much pollution in the river but gives opportunity for improvement. Similar to Knutsford playing fields it is not possible to see the river from the playing fields as the river is significantly below the eyeline. However, the site aspect is generally more open. Unlike Knutsford, there is no stepped access to the riverside and this makes access challenging especially in poorer weather. Despite the presence of a mown path and open space alongside the river, there are no seating areas to encourage public contemplation. Isolation on the opposite side offers opportunities for rough sleepers and exacerbates an existing litter problem not uncommon to urban rivers. In this case we see a number of sharps which detract further from visitor numbers.

W - Waterfields Recreation Ground - consists of formal amenity grassland alongside a straightened, canalised river. There is a tarmac path lined with an avenue of mature Common Lime (*Tilia x europea*) and a footbridge leading across the river to an area dominated by grassland and scrub. The river bank on the western edge is sparsely vegetated and becomes more formal with brick edging in the south. As the site approaches Water Lane there is increasing litter and poor odour. Sewage misconnections, outfall pollution and littering continue to contribute to poor water quality.

On the other side of the road, the river is heavily shaded and the path is fenced. There are rough sleepers on the eastern side and large amounts of litter, including drug paraphernalia.

Tes - as the path approaches Tesco the tree canopy opens significantly. Tesco has shown previous support for in-river works such as litter collection but the bank side, which is very steep, in poor condition and needs securing. The choice of plants is incongruous with riverside planting and could be replaced.

Disconnect - after this point there is no longer public access to the river and users are diverted onto busy roads. There is a cycle route which leads from Tesco to Oxhey Park following the former mill cut but it is poorly signposted and very congested. The inaccessible stretch of the river appears poorly maintained and is likely to suffer from the same issues as other sites such as lack of light, pollution and invasive non-native species. Additionally, ageing flood defenses mean this stretch is canalised affecting flow rates. Notably the

stretch is privately owned and any works within eight metres of the river will involve collaboration between landowners, the local authority and the Environment Agency.

O – Oxhey Park - in the eastern part of Oxhey Park the river flows through an area of secondary woodland known as The Dell. Signposting and access to the park from the town centre is poor. The construction of new facilities at Oxhey Park North may alleviate this issue. The majority of the park consists of sloping amenity grassland with more formal parkland elements. The southern edge of the river is a brick retaining wall but there have been several environmental interventions already in the river channel such as planting and the introduction of a litter boom plus berm creation to improve the flow of the river.

RI – Riverside Recreation Ground - the path crosses the road from Oxhey Park and into Riverside recreation ground. The signage here is lacking and the path and seating requires restoration or replacement. However, it is relatively open with pleasant river views and good river access. As the path heads west a fringe of scrub has developed blocking access to and views of the river near the weir known as Tumbling Bay but there are interesting habitats to be seen from the bridge itself where you enter Riverside Park. There is a raised area of wildflower meadow after the bridge with a thick border of woodland - consequently, it is not possible to see the river. A path through the Park links to the Ebury Way which crosses and then moves away from the river.

LL - Lairage Land - the Lairage Land section of the Colne is a mix of habitats between the Ebury Way and an area of housing. Access to the Lairage Land itself can be made from the housing areas of Stripling Way and Jellicoe Road. The entrances and paths need improvement but give access to a large area of reedbeds that were extended a number of years ago and now require maintenance.

Along the river margins there are areas of grassland and increasingly woodland but it is not possible to access the river and occasionally not possible to view it from the Ebury Way. Further along the Ebury Way it is possible to look from where the Ebury Way crosses the river to where the river exits the district. It is possible to see where large swathes of Himalayan Balsam were 'bashed' in this area.

The prevalence of invasive non-native species throughout the stretch remains an ongoing battle despite various to address them from a range of partners. Much Himalayan Balsam, Giant Hogweed and Japanese Knotweed plus an ongoing problem with Signal Crayfish are evident throughout the stretch an eradicating these requires ongoing long-term commitment. Invasive non-native species (INNS) were also recorded along the Colne by the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust in July 2019 and are regularly monitored by WBC. Whilst 'rust' treatment for the Himalayan Balsam isn't yet available this should be considered as a potential approach in future.

## **4 Recommendations**

**4.1 Landscape masterplan** – please see Appendix F for presentation of whole area and Appendix G by site.

From the site visits undertaken, group and individual meetings with stakeholders and from the detailed river restoration plans for seven sites along the river corridor, a programme of wide ranging and exciting improvements have been collated into a masterplan and action plan. These address the key objectives to ensure that the River Colne project delivers high quality accessible green space to Watford's urban environments. This is at the heart of sustainable regeneration and renewal. Proximity and connectivity play a major role in determining the usage these spaces receive. Improving access will increase public engagement with the river and bring the river corridor back under the stewardship of the local community.

## Access

The access work will create a continuous, coherent, visible, accessible signed route along the corridor following the course of the river as closely as possible. New links are identified, repair of existing and installation of new facilities included but works are relevant to their location and will not over-urbanise the route yet whilst creating an improved riverside walk along the Colne River Valley as promoted by the Mayor.

This will include:

- the addition of step access to allow safe, access for all
- seating, viewing platforms and a bird hide to encourage greater interaction with the river. Including the creation of a 'destination' areas
- path and boundary improvement or installation – through improved/new surfacing, railings, gates
- signage will be key to providing a strong connection between sites throughout the north and south stretches of the Colne
  - route signage – new posts, waymarks, using the new logo to identify the whole route
  - Riverside Walk location boards at entrances to welcome people to the sites, show how the sites link together and encourage greater understanding and use.
  - Notice boards at certain locations to included details of forthcoming events
  - Riverside Walk interpretation at destinations incorporating educational information
  - Information panels will be placed on road bridges where they cross the river to remind people that the river is present
  - trails are proposed to promote an appreciation of the natural value of the river and of the built heritage assets of the area such as the Grade II listed Five Arches Railway Viaduct north of Water Lane.
- Research raised the request for a new river crossing from the Ebury Way/Riverside Park area across to Riverwell. It is agreed that such a link would provide a valuable new link to the wider off-road network. However, there are many challenges in such a project including landfill, floodplain and limited available space but costs are identified in the action plan. An early scoping study into this option is recommended to consider the key points to identify whether this such a structure is possible.



A coordinated signage palate highlights the linkages along the river (images provided by [www.fwdp.co.uk](http://www.fwdp.co.uk))

## Art & heritage

There are many opportunities for introducing arts and heritage to the river corridor and at many scales involving professional artists and also the local community.

A proposed focus is along the walking, cycle path that takes the route away from the river along the Old Mill Cut which has been culverted behind Tesco and Century Business Park and then enters Oxhey Park across the River Colne at what will be, the North Oxhey Park Cafe. This is currently a heavily congested urban route. It is proposed to create a flowing art trail through this urban disconnect area to inform and engage users with what is under their feet. There will be a combination of a flowing river set into the pavement with associated art features at a higher level to draw the eye through the route. There is potential to develop this in partnership with the Watford Museum to capitalise on heritage landmarks such as the Pump House Theatre. This work would also take the opportunity to link people to the sections of the cut that still exists and as such promote the river route as a whole.

Research found that the art elements previously installed in the parks along the river and that are directly related to the heritage and environment of the sites were very popular. Additional art installations by Luke Perry, the original sculptor are proposed helping to create a sense of continuity along the length of the river. Other potential artistic interventions include restoration of an existing mural and delivery of another. This can be developed further through elements of community engagement over the ten-year project.



### River landscape

Works identified within the river improvement plans include:

- Works within the river to create two stage channels, berms and flow deflectors to allow the river to respond appropriately to both high and low flows
- create new features such as backwaters and scrapes to add habitat diversity
- habitat management to allow greater light onto the river channel and to stop degradation of habitats through encroaching reeds etc
- work around outfalls to improve water quality where possible
- installation of bat boxes
- identification of management actions to manage habitats appropriately.

### Wider opportunities

It is anticipated that many of the recommendations of the site specific river improvement plans can be applied to the privately owned section of the river between Tesco and Oxhey Park in the future as

opportunities arise through development and wider corporate engagement through other elements of this project. Special efforts need to be made to collaborate with landowners on their responsibilities regarding flooding and issues such as appropriate maintenance in these areas which have potential to negatively affect the corridor as a whole whether that is flooding downstream or allowing the spread of invasive non-native species.

Various opportunities are available for works outside of the immediate river corridor and these could be developed in a further stage of the project. For example, redevelopment and regeneration may provide opportunities for enhanced flood and water management using run-off capture measures. (green roofs, permeable paving, filter strips and swales). River restoration can contribute directly to urban regeneration by offering sustainable flood management, improved environmental quality or by creating an aesthetic identity for urban areas. A sense of place can be established that enables people to connect with each other and connect with their neighbourhood. As such, opportunities to increase habitat value, open culverts and re-naturalise river channels should be considered.

The improvement of the river habitats can also have important biodiversity and climate implications. The improved bankside management should enable the population of water voles currently at Croxley Common to populate higher up the valley. The potential for an element of reintroduction of a population has also been costed. Works to the reedbeds around Timberlake may create areas that bitterns could also return to. The value of the trees and wetlands of the river corridor should not be underestimated in carbon sequestration benefits which are vital in the light of the current climate crisis. Extension of such areas will be myriad benefits whilst the removal of trees must be done carefully to strike the right balance between light getting to the river and removing this carbon store.

All members of the steering committee are keen to draw public awareness to the connection between overuse of water and the lack of public supply and events and engagement activities linked to the practical work provides huge scope to increase knowledge of the whole water cycle.

#### **4.2 Summary of proposals**

The full details of the proposals are shown in the Action Plan, Appendix H, and include the costs and organisation and stakeholders to drive improvement.

Installation of information/interpretation boards are identified for all sites but other works are summarised below, access first and then river landscape works.

K - Knutsford playing fields the proposals include

- Continuation of sculpture trail
- Creation of new path and improvement to existing paths, and creating safe crossing

in addition to

- River restoration including creation of low lying marginal shelves with associated planting
- Selective tree felling to increase light to increase plant diversity
- Formalise grazing regime on Affinity Water land
- Improve habitat for roosting of bats
- Resolve pollution problems

TA - Timberlake Allotments the proposals include

- Installation of platform overlooking reedbeds
- Creation of safe crossing

in addition to

- Enhance pond area by reconnecting it to the river, enlarging the area of open standing water and improving annual management of the reedbed.
- Diversify river channel including inclusion of brush berms and associated small pools
- Improve habitat for roosting of bats

RR - Radlett Road Playing Fields the proposals include

- Installation of bench at viewing point
- Improve access with steps at 2 locations and new tarmac path

in addition to

- Restoration of constructed wetland with modifications to provide extensive reedbeds.
- Reconnect backwaters to the river, desilt and create low lying marginal shelf with planting
- Enhancement of existing ditch network and the Hillfield Brook.
- Reprofilng of the river channel via the installation of brush berms and marginal shelves.
- Improved management of the riparian zone
- Removal of invasive species
- Resolve pollution problems

W - Waterfields Recreation Ground the proposals include

- Create mural under bridge
- Creation of safe crossing

in addition to

- Reprofilng of the river channel via the installation of brush berms, marginal shelves and bank regrading.
- Create pondscape on Cadent Gas land
- Backwater and wet woodland works
- Invasive species removal
- Resolve pollution problems

Tes/Disconnect - Area of disconnect and Tesco the proposals include

- Improve signposting and art, including hard landscape for heritage path along 'Hidden River'
- New waterside native planting and biodiversity interpretation board
- creation of safe crossing

O - Oxhey Park the proposals include

- Improved signage to Ebury Way
- Repaint bridge and create mural
- Continuation of sculpture trail

in addition to

- Improvements to wet woodland
- Woodland management works
- Grassland management
- Continuation of existing enhancement project undertaken by local volunteers.
- Relove pollution problems

RI - Riverside Park the proposals include

- Installation of information and interpretation boards
- Open up views to the river from Ebury Way

- Replacement of benches

in addition to

- Creation of pond network adjacent to river corridor.
- Installation of fish passes on 2 weirs.
- Improved management of the riparian corridor
- Installation of brush berms and flow deflectors.
- Improved wildflower meadow management.
- Resolve pollution problems.
- Invasive species removal

LL - Lairage Land the proposals include

- open up views to the river from Ebury Way
- create footpath and install bird hide

in addition to

- reprofiling of the river channel via the installation of brush berms and deflectors
- removal of historic bank revetment
- creation of backwaters and ponds
- riparian tree works
- resolve pollution problems
- invasive species removal

#### 4.3 Summary of total costs

See action plan at appendix H for a detailed breakdown and timings of all works. All cost estimates are based on recent quotes from local contractors for similar activities or from experience of other project delivery. Where removal of material is required and a range of costs are possible the higher costs has been used. As early as possible silt investigation should be undertaken for these costs to be reviewed.

Site	Signage	Route impr/creation	Other landscape/ furniture/ misc.	Art	River works	Total
Knutsford	9,250	15,750	8,750	15,000	92,450	<b>141,200</b>
Timberlake	7,500	12,000	23,250	0	278,300	<b>321,050</b>
Radlett Road	7,500	26,500	3,750	0	497,800	<b>535,550</b>
Waterfields	8,000	12,000	0	0	125,000	<b>150,000</b>
Tesco/disconnect	12,000	36,000	0	50,000	1,500	<b>99,500</b>
Oxhey Park	8,000	12,000	5,000	20,000	20,600	<b>65,600</b>
Riverside Rd/Pk	5,500	310,000	3,500	0	69,500	<b>388,500</b>
Lairage Land	4,000	20,000	500	0	164,500	<b>189,000</b>
<b>Total build</b>	<b>61,750</b>	<b>444,250</b>	<b>44,750</b>	<b>90,000</b>	<b>1,249,650</b>	<b>1,890,400</b>
Contingency 10%						<b>189,040</b>
Fees est 15%						<b>283,560</b>
Inflation						<b>56,712</b>
<b>TOTAL COST</b>						<b>2,419,712</b>

Costs of maintenance will be developed as management plans for each site are produced as works are completed. Current estimates are a cost of £53,000, £32,000 via contractor and £21,000 for volunteer costs.

## 4.3 Identification/explanation of Improvement Priorities

### Summary of proposed priorities

Access & signage – to meet the priority of the Mayors manifesto signage of the whole route and initial physical work to ensure an accessible route exists along the whole route. Also, development work on the disconnect section including heritage/art elements **COST: £90,000**

River restoration work – due to the close proximity of work and closely linked environmental outputs the four most northerly sites are identified as the priority for action– Knutsford, Timberlake, Radlett Road and Waterfields. This would include – 2 stage channel and wooded debris installation, wetland scrapes, backwater restoration, marginal berms and tree works as required per site. Design and permitting would take place in 2021-22 with delivery taking place in 2022-23. **COST: £355,000**  
**£100,000 has already been indicated towards these works via EA and Affinity Water providing that WBC can provide match funding.**

### In more detail

The main priority for the access improvements is the delivery of a 'riverside walk' which was included in the Mayor's manifesto. This can be achieved through

- minor surfacing improvements and new sections to ensure safe, easy access to all
- providing a cohesive signage strategy and rebranding along the length of the walk
- linking the north and south more clearly through signage and development to create a flowing art trail to the disconnect section following the established cycle route and roughly old course of river branch.

Additional boards relating to heritage and nature to support the creation of trails is included in the second phase of works. Watford Museum is keen to be involved with this element of work, with the extension of the art trail incorporating historical murals and additional art sculptures by Luke Perry. The second phase also includes path improvement works including new paths plus seating.

The high priority works of the River Improvement Plans are

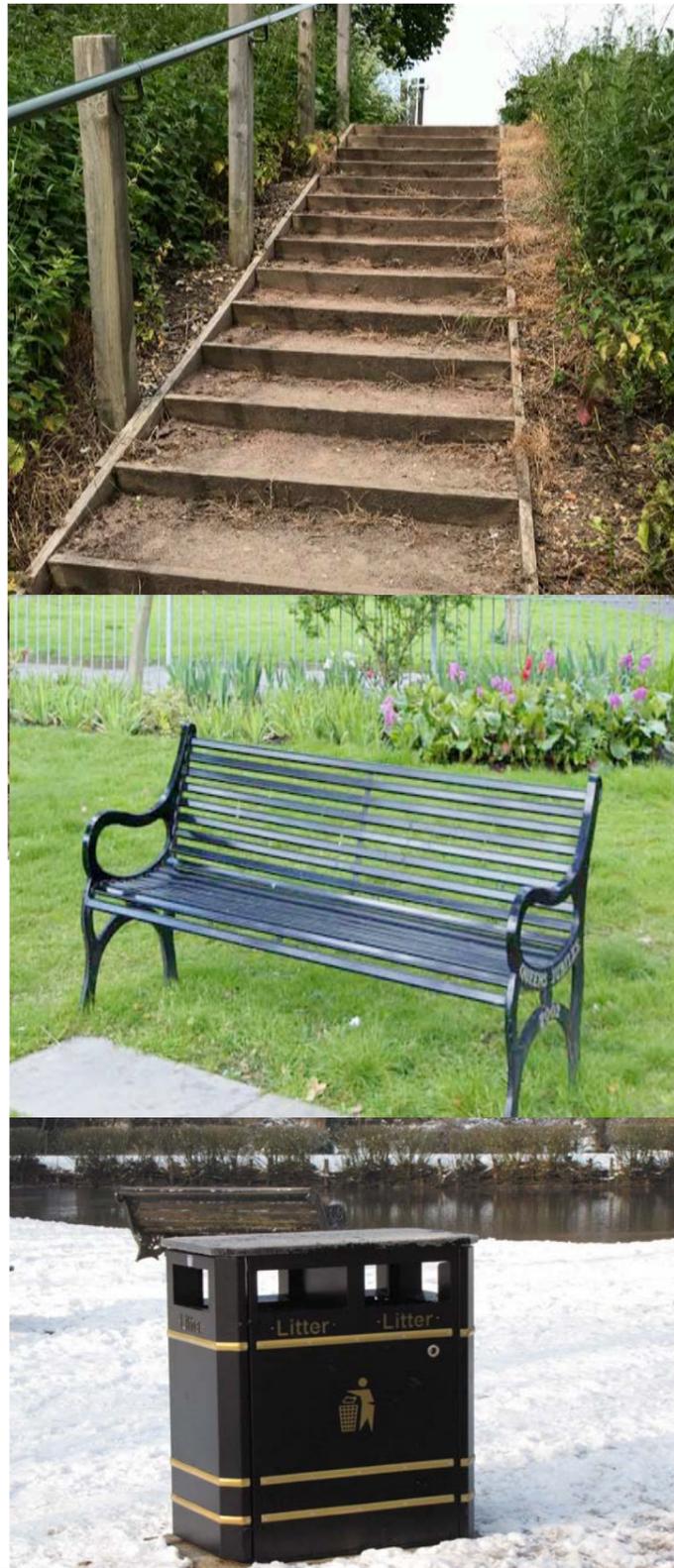
- Knutsford Playing Fields - 2 stage channel with wooded debris installation and wetland scrapes
- Timberlake Allotments: backwater restoration and wooded debris installation
- Radlett Road: backwater restoration, marginal berms and wooded debris installation
- Waterfields: 2 stage channel, bank scalloping, wooded debris installation, backwater and wet woodland works
- A plan of tree works required for all activities.

Site investigation works will inform detailed designs plus quantities and costs for the river improvement works. Methodologies for each construction activity can then be produced and consents obtained. The design works will also inform a plan for volunteer habitat improvement works consisting wooded debris installation and bat box installation at the 4 sites.

# SIGNS



# FURNITURE



# STRUCTURES



# ART



# Feasibility Study

# Environmental Monitoring Project

## Rediscovering the River Colne

February 2020



Presented by

**The Colne Catchment Action Network**







## The Colne Catchment Action Network

Affinity Water	Groundwork South
Bath Road Piscatorial Society	Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust
Blenheim Angling Society	Herts Countryside Management Project
British Airways	Herts County Council
British Airways Angling Society	Impress the Chess
Bucks County Council	Iver & District Countryside Association
Canal & Rivers Trust	Iver Parish Council
Chesham Town Council	Landscape Futures
Chiltern District Council	London Borough of Hillingdon
Chilterns Conservation Board	London Wildlife Trust
Chilterns Chalk Stream Project	Misbourne River Action
Chiltern Society	River Chess Association
Colnbrook with Poyle Parish Council	Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative	St Albans City & District Council
Colne Valley Park CIC	Slough Borough Council
Dacorum Borough Council	South Bucks District Council
Dacorum Environmental Forum Water Group	Spelthorne Borough Council
Eastcote Conservation Panel	Spelthorne Natural History Society
Egham & Staines Conservation Volunteers	Thames Water
Environment Agency	Three Rivers District Council
Friends of Colne Valley Park	Uxbridge Rovers Angling & Conservation Society
Friends of Gt Barn, Harmondsworth	Ver Valley Society
Friends of Pinn Meadows	Watford Borough Council
Friends of Stockers Lake	Wild Trout Trust
Greater London Authority	Wraysbury Parish Council
Groundwork Hertfordshire	Zoological Society of London

### Rediscovering the River Colne Workstream 3 Delivery Partners:

This feasibility study was produced by Groundwork South in partnership with the Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative, Community Connections Community Interest Company and the Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust.



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## 1 Abbreviations used

ARMI	Anglers Riverfly Monitoring Initiative
A	Ammonia / Ammoniacal Nitrogen (NH <sub>3</sub> -N) - used as a measure of organic pollution e.g. related to wastewater
CCP CIC	Community Connections Project Community Interest Company
CVFC	Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative
EA	Environment Agency
HMWT	Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust
P	Phosphate / soluble reactive phosphorous – used as a measure of nutrient pollution e.g. related to chemical fertilisers
SWOP	Surface Water Outfall Programme
TW	Thames Water
WBC	Watford Borough Council
WFD	Water Framework Directive
WWQF	Watford Water Quality Forum
ZSL	The Zoological Society of London

## 2 Introduction

### 2.1 Background

Rediscovering the River Colne is a ground-breaking project that aspires to bring the River Colne to the heart of Watford and its people. The project will see the Colne corridor become a positive asset within the borough, enabling it to reach its full potential for both local people and wildlife.

We will provide sustainable solutions to resolve the issues affecting the river and to regenerate the public spaces it flows through. We aspire to providing a healthy river corridor, with clean water, diverse wildlife and low flood risk that is accessible to all and of high amenity value to local people.

Community ownership, education and awareness are key principles which will underpin each activity that we deliver. We will work to ensure that local people and businesses are empowered to champion their local river and that local stakeholders actively contribute to the outcomes of the project.

### 2.2 Mission statement

Workstream 3 of the Rediscovering the River Colne Project outlines out a new Environmental Monitoring Project. The project is structured as citizen science network (i.e. led by members of the public) to empower local people to take the lead on monitoring the ecological and geomorphological condition of the River Colne over time.

### 2.3 Objectives

The Environmental Monitoring Project will deliver a robust citizen science monitoring programme that will:

1. Engage, inspire and train local people and stakeholders to monitor the health of the River Colne
2. Complement existing environmental monitoring work conducted by partner organisations
3. Collect relevant, useful data that will be used to inform key stakeholders and deliver gains for the local environment
4. Monitor the river's recovery over the 10-year duration of the project as habitat and water quality improvements are made

### 2.4 Initial stakeholder engagement

Key stakeholders and partner organisations that operate in Watford were consulted to understand what environmental monitoring is already conducted along the River Colne (see Table 1):

- Community Connections Project
- Community Interest Company (CCP CIC)
  - Coordinates 'Friends of Oxhey Park' community group
  - Coordinates 'Watford on the Water' community project
- Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT)
- Watford Green Gym
- Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative (CVFC)
  - Serve as the Anglers Riverfly Monitoring Initiative (ARMI) Riverfly Coordinator for the Chilterns, Herts and Middlesex Hub
- Environment Agency (EA)
- Thames Water (TW)

**Table 1 - Existing environmental monitoring activities along the River Colne in Watford**

Organisation	Activity	Location	Frequency
Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative	Hosts an online tracking application for recording the location of: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invasive plant species</li> <li>Pollution incidents</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The River Colne</li> <li>All Colne tributaries</li> <li>All Colne distributaries</li> </ul>	All year round
	Riverfly monitoring coordinator	5 sites along the Colne in Watford	Monthly
Community Connections Project CIC	Removal of invasive plants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Himalayan Balsam</li> <li>Japanese Knotweed</li> </ul>	The Colne in Watford	May - August
	Signal Crayfish trapping	The Colne in Watford	All year round
Green Gym	Removal of invasive plants: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Himalayan Balsam</li> <li>Japanese Knotweed</li> </ul>	The Colne in Watford	May - August
Environment Agency	Water chemical monitoring (long-term)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bushey Mill Lane (upstream of Watford)</li> <li>Hampermill, Oxhey (downstream of Watford)</li> </ul>	Monthly
	Deploy data sondes to measure water quality (short-term)	Various. Surrounding the Water Lane outfall (Feb 2019 – present)	Deployed temporarily to investigate specific incidents
Thames Water	Surface Water Outfall Programme	Various locations	To investigate severe or ongoing pollution incidents

## 2.5 Plans and directives supported by this feasibility study

The monitoring activities identified through this feasibility study aim to support the objectives of the following plans and directives:

- Watford Borough Council’s Corporate Plan 2019/2020:
  - CP18: Develop a River Colne improvement strategy to enhance the river and its surrounds as a green asset for Watford
- Watford Green Infrastructure Plan (Landuse Planning, March 2011)
- The Mayor of Watford’s Manifesto pledges:
  - Protecting our local environment
  - A sustainable town
  - Bringing communities together
- Thames River Basin Management Plan
- Water Framework Directive
- The Colne Catchment Action Plan

### 3 Project Scope

#### 3.1 A New Citizen Science Network

##### 3.1.1 Rationale

The Environmental Monitoring Project will be structured as a citizen science programme which will deliver the following benefits:

- Connect local people with the River Colne and raise awareness of the threats it faces
- Inspire the community to enjoy the river and the wildlife it supports
- Encourage local people to take responsibility for the condition of the River Colne and take action to protect it

##### 3.1.2 Partnership working

The project will build upon the ongoing monitoring work conducted by local organisations. Where required, skilled individuals from partner organisations will contribute by providing training and coordinating monitors.

##### 3.1.3 Monitoring opportunities

The project will measure a range of parameters to track changes in water quality, biodiversity and the river’s geomorphology. Volunteers will be invited to enrol for one or more monitoring activities of their choice (see Table 2).

Monitoring activity		Volunteer monitoring timetable											
		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Water quality	Riverfly monitoring												→
	Outfall Safari <i>Every 4 years</i>												
	Water chemical testing												→
Biodiversity & Geomorphology	Geomorphological surveys												
	Invasive plant species												
	Dragonfly surveys												
	Fish surveys												

**Table 2 - Environmental monitoring activities for citizen scientists**

##### 3.1.4 Training

No previous experience is required to enrol as a citizen scientist. All new volunteers will receive free training in the monitoring activity of their choice.

##### 3.1.5 Equipment

All surveying tools and personal protective equipment will be provided to volunteers free of charge.

### **3.1.6 Volunteer recruitment**

A promotional strategy will be developed to ensure that the citizen science network attracts and engages a diverse range of people from across the community in Watford.

The group will connect with the wider community by participating in the 'Friends of the River Colne' (FOTRC) network (proposed in Workstream 4 – the community engagement project). The citizen science network could gain volunteers by partnership working and sharing resources with other organisations within the FOTRC.

### **3.1.7 Volunteer retention**

A volunteer coordination strategy will be developed to ensure that the programme supports and retains volunteers. The programme will:

- Benefit the volunteers by providing:
  - Rewarding and enjoyable opportunities to improve the local environment
  - Opportunities to learn and develop skills
- Be as flexible as possible in order to accommodate peoples' different:
  - Timetables and availability
  - Capacity for commitment
- Be as accessible as possible in order to include and empower people who have:
  - Differing physical abilities
  - Learning disabilities
  - Mental health issues
- Be welcoming and inclusive for all people regardless of their:
  - Age
  - Ethnicity or race
  - Religion or belief
  - Social or educational background

### **3.1.8 Connected citizen scientists**

An online communications network will be established to connect citizen scientists. The online community will use social media and an email mailing list (or other depending upon the preference of the citizen scientists).

### **3.1.9 Annual citizen science conference**

An annual citizen science conference will be established to enable volunteers to:

- Showcase the annual findings of each monitoring activity
- Meet with one another and share ideas
- Receive feedback on the environmental monitoring project
- Learn about opportunities to get involved in new and different monitoring activities
- Outline actions for the following year

## **3.2 Environmental Outcomes**

### **3.2.1 Water quality**

#### **3.2.1.1 Watford Water Quality Forum**

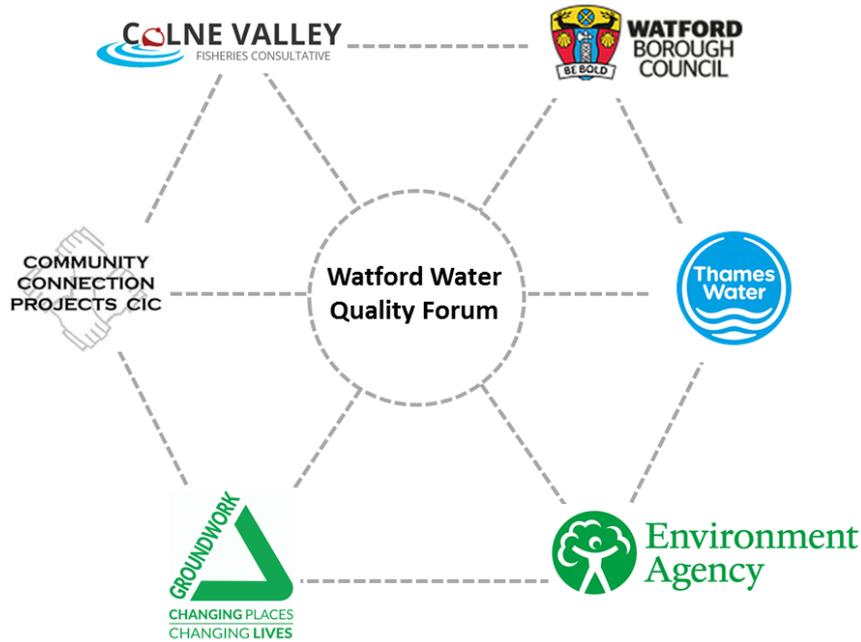
The Watford Water Quality Forum (WWQF) was established by the Colne Catchment Action Network in September 2019. The objectives of the WWQF are:

- To connect the key stakeholders who play a role in improving water quality in the River Colne in Watford at quarterly meetings
- To share evidence of pollution incidents and water quality issues in Watford:
  - Observations from community groups e.g. CCP CIC and CVFC
  - Pollution incidents reported by on the CVFC app (<http://www.cvfc.org.uk/pollution>)
- To streamline and expedite efforts to trace and resolve pollution issues in Watford

#### **3.2.1.2 WWQF partners**

The WWQF connects key stakeholders with an interest in, or responsibility for, maintaining good water quality in the River Colne as it flows through Watford. The forum seeks to expand its membership in future to encompass Highways England and neighbouring councils. The forum currently comprises the following partners (see Figure 1):

- Watford Borough Council
- Thames Water
- Environment Agency
- Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative
- Community Connections Project Community Interest Company
- Groundwork South



**Figure 1 - Partners involved in Watford Water Quality Forum**

**3.2.1.3 Stronger evidence base**

The citizen science project will inform and strengthen the work of the WWQF by providing additional water quality data (see Table 3).

Monitoring activity	Data provided
Riverfly Monitoring	Invertebrate biodiversity – indicative of water quality
Outfall Safari	Comprehensive map of all polluting outfalls
Water Chemical Testing	Extent and location of chemical pollution

**Table 3 - Water quality evidence that will be collected by citizen scientists in the environmental monitoring project**

**3.2.1.4 Annual water quality report**

All water quality data produced by citizen scientists will be presented in an annual water quality report. The objectives of the report are:

- To highlight any pollution hotspots along the river that may be indicative of misconnections or other network errors
- To track water quality in the Colne over time to determine the baseline from which we can improve upon

The long-term outcomes of this report will be to:

- Enable Thames Water to prioritise their resources effectively to resolve the sources of pollution identified in Watford
- Evaluate if efforts to resolve pollution issues have delivered long-lasting, measurable improvements in water quality

### 3.2.2 Geomorphology and biodiversity

#### 3.2.2.1 Annual geomorphology and biodiversity reports

The geomorphology and biodiversity data collected through the project (see Table 2) will be reported upon annually to local stakeholders and the general public. The objectives of the reports will be:

- To record changes in the river habitat and the presence of key indicator species
- To track the locations and prevalence of invasive species along the river
- To track any changes to the geomorphological condition of the river

The outcomes of the reports (see Figure 2) will be to:

- To show how the physical habitat improvements undertaken as part of workstream 1 have improved the river’s geomorphology and biodiversity
- To identify new land management recommendations where required

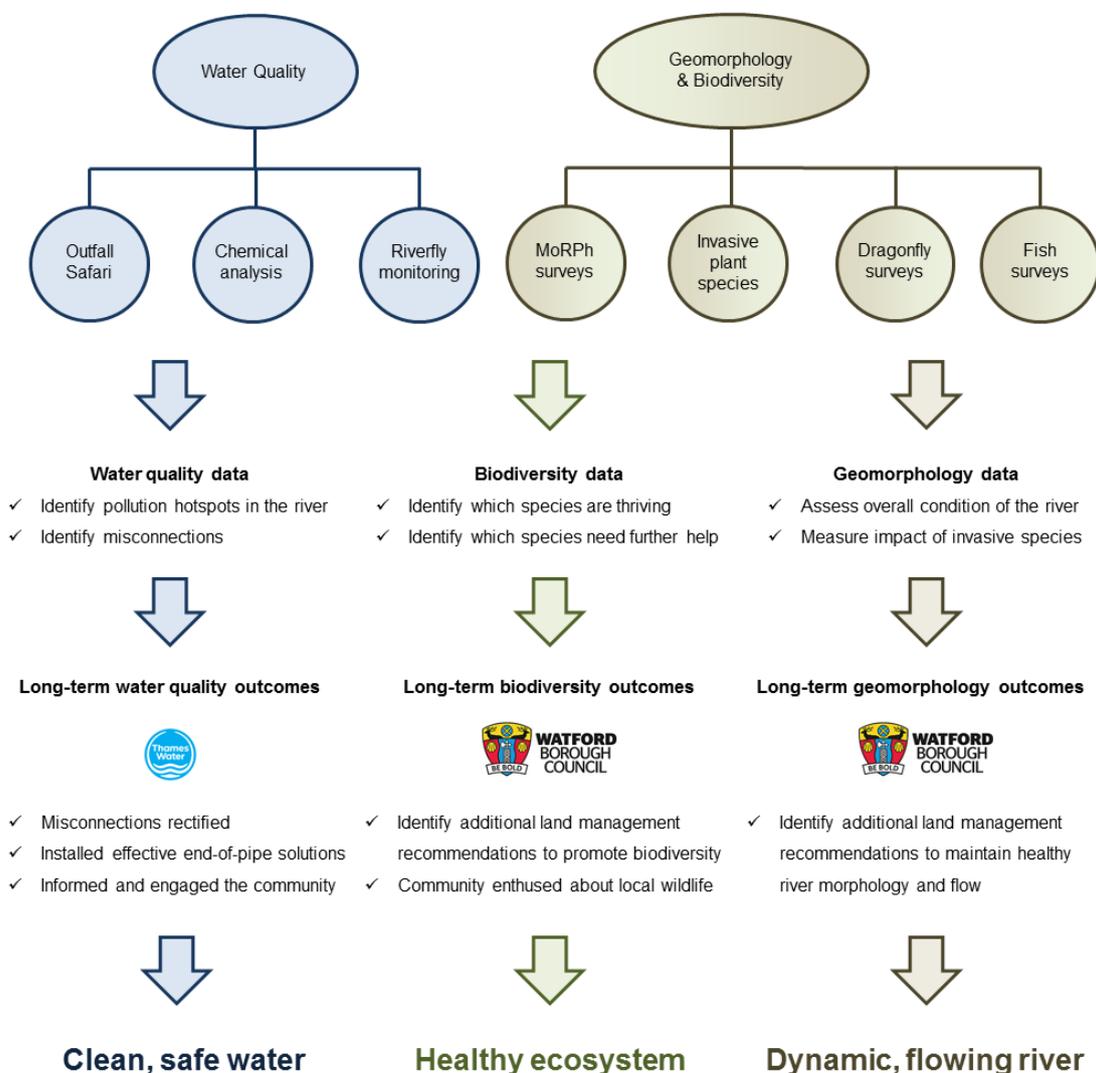


Figure 2 - Overview of all proposed environmental monitoring activities, the data that will be produced and the outcomes

### 3.3 Project Coordination

We propose that a Project Coordinator would be recruited to manage the environmental monitoring project (see Table 4). The project coordinator would be recruited for 104 days per year, which is approximately 50% of a full-time position. For a full breakdown of project coordinator costs and activities, please see section 5 pages 60-62.

Activity	Task
Promote project and recruit volunteers	Develop promotion and recruitment strategy
	Attend community events to recruit volunteers and promote project
	Register new volunteers and provide administrative support
	Publish promotional material via agreed media channels
	Manage social media interactions and enquiries
	Manage citizen science network and communications
	Coordinate annual citizen science forum
Reporting	Produce annual water quality report
	Produce annual biodiversity and geomorphology reports
	Facilitate quarterly Watford Water Quality Forum meetings
Environmental monitoring support	Organise survey programmes
	Assist project partners with training days as required
	Provide administrative support for volunteers
	Collate, circulate and publish data as required

**Table 4 - Responsibilities of the Environmental Monitoring Project Coordinator.**

## 4 Environmental Monitoring Activities

Section 4 outlines the seven proposed environmental monitoring activities that would be conducted as part of the Rediscovering the River Colne Project in Watford.

### 4.1 Riverfly Monitoring

#### 4.1.1 Introduction

##### 4.1.1.1 Anglers' Riverfly Monitoring Initiative (ARMI)

The Anglers' Riverfly Monitoring Initiative (ARMI) is a citizen science initiative that facilitates regular monitoring of river water quality by trained volunteers, referred to as riverfly monitors. Monitors record the presence of freshwater invertebrate species (see Figure 3) – the results provide an early and reliable indicator of pollution issues.



**Figure 3 - Riverflies - adult Mayfly (left) and adult Caddisfly (right). Source: the Riverfly Partnership.**

ARMI is used widely in the UK as a 'neighbourhood watch' for rivers and is practiced by anglers, environmentalists and community groups. The initiative helps rivers to be monitored more widely and at greater frequency than is possible by the Environment Agency alone. It has proven effective in identifying pollution incidents and ensuring action is taken. In several cases this has led to prosecution of polluters by the statutory authorities and has prevented similar future incidents.

The ARMI scheme was established in the UK in 2007 and coordinated by the Riverfly Partnership. ARMI is recognised on all Water Framework Directive River Basin Management Plans in England and Wales.

##### 4.1.1.2 Existing riverfly monitoring in Watford

The Chilterns, Hertfordshire & Middlesex Riverfly Hub provides training to anyone wishing to monitor riverflies in Hertfordshire, Middlesex and Chilterns areas. The hub offers an annual programme of training workshops run by its five Riverfly Partnership accredited ARMI instructors.

The Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative (CVFC) is the designated Riverfly Coordinator for the Chilterns, Hertfordshire & Middlesex area, which covers Watford. The CVFC is responsible for:

- Delivering Riverfly Partnership-accredited ARMI training sessions
- Coordinating the existing team of volunteer riverfly monitors in Watford



**Figure 4 - Riverfly identification using the ARMI methodology**



**Figure 5 - Riverfly monitoring in the Colne at Knutsford Playing Fields**

#### **4.1.2 Rationale**

##### **4.1.2.1 Existing monitoring effort**

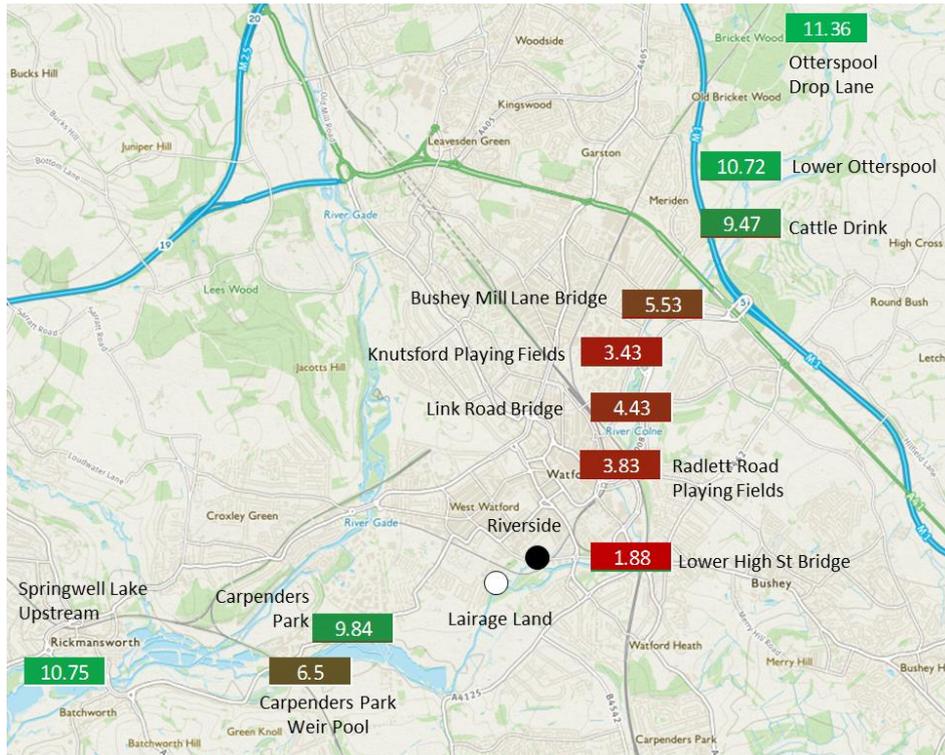
CVFC coordinates monthly riverfly monitoring at the following sites:

1. Bushey Mill Lane Bridge
2. Knutsford Playing Fields
3. Link Road Bridge
4. Radlett Road Playing Field
5. Lower High Street Bridge

##### **4.1.2.2 Challenges**

To date, riverfly scores indicate that water quality in the River Colne is at its poorest condition as it flows through Watford, falling to its lowest between Radlett Road Playing Fields and Lower High Street Bridge (see Figure 5). The riverfly monitoring effort in Watford faces the following challenges:

- The pool of trained riverfly monitors in Watford is small (only 5 monitors)
  - In the event monitors are not available to survey (e.g. due to illness) data is not collected as cover is not available
- No riverfly data is collected in southern Watford – the most southerly point is Lower High Street Bridge



**Figure 6 - Riverfly monitoring sites in Watford area. Numbers and colours denote riverfly score at each site from red (poor) to green (high) (December 2019). New monitoring sites proposed: Riverside (black) and Lairage Land (white)**

### 4.1.3 Aims and objectives

We propose to extend the riverfly monitoring initiative in Watford to survey more sites and include more volunteers. Specifically, our objectives are to:

- Survey two additional sites in Watford:
  1. Riverside
  2. Lairage Land
- Recruit a new team of riverfly monitors to assist and extend the existing volunteer effort
- Produce data to feed into the annual water quality report

### 4.1.4 Methodology

#### 4.1.4.1 Sample collection

The sampling method is a three-minute kick/sweep sample using a standard kick sample net followed by a one-minute manual search (see Figure 7).

1. Identify the different habitats within the sampling area, for example, fast moving riffles, shallow still water, slow water and weed
2. Split the total active sampling time of three minutes proportionally according to the relative areas of the habitats identified. For example, if riffles occupy 50% of the site, they will be sampled for 90 seconds
3. Sample the habitats working across the river and progressively upstream. Rest the net on the riverbed and vigorously disturb the area immediately upstream using your foot (the 'kick

sample'). The invertebrates are carried into the net by the current. For weed areas 'sweep' the net upstream through the weed bed

4. The complete sample may be taken at once, or the sample may be decanted from the net into a bucket containing river water



**Figure 7 - Riverfly survey: (A) sample collection, (B) washing and sample sorting (C) species identification**

#### **4.1.4.2 Washing the sample**

To ease the counting process, it is important to remove as much of the unwanted debris as possible without losing any of the required invertebrates.

1. Tip the whole sample into the large bucket of river water. Strain the water back through the net whilst agitating the stones and gravel to dislodge the invertebrates
2. Refill the bucket with fresh river water and repeat until all of the invertebrates are dislodged and are now in the net
3. Check the debris for any remaining invertebrates
4. Return the remaining sample from the net into the bucket, half filled with clean water, for sorting

#### **4.1.4.3 Sorting the sample**

1. Take small 'sub-samples' from the bucket and place into a shallow white tray half-filled with clean water
2. Using a large pipette transfer the targeted invertebrates described overleaf into a segmented tray ready for counting (see Figure 8). Sorting the sample and estimating the numbers of the target groups becomes quicker with experience.

#### 4.1.4.4 Species identification

The presence and abundance of each species is used to generate a score, which is reflective of the water quality at the time of sample. The presence of the 8 target groups will vary in abundance throughout the year (Table 5). Not all groups will be present at all sites.

Target group	Species or common name
Caddisflies	Cased caddis
	Caseless caddis
Up-winged flies	Mayfly ( <i>Ephemeroidea</i> )
	Blue-winged olive ( <i>Ephemerellidae</i> )
	Flat bodied ( <i>Hepdtageniidae</i> )
	Olives ( <i>Baetidae</i> )
Stoneflies	-
Freshwater shrimp	<i>Gammarus</i>

Table 5 - The 8 riverfly target groups



Figure 8 - Riverfly species collected in survey. Cased caddisfly (left) and various invertebrates collected in tray ready for counting (right). Source: The Riverfly Partnership and Watford Borough Council, respectively.

#### 4.1.4.5 Reporting to the Environment Agency

The CVFC submit all ARMI scores to the Riverfly Partnership's online data repository. The process for submitting riverfly data is as follows (and is summarised in Figure 9):

1. Volunteers submit their survey results to the CVFC online at [www.rflies.uk](http://www.rflies.uk)
2. The Riverfly Coordinator (CVFC) verifies the survey results
3. If monthly ARMI scores for each site:
  - Are equal to or above expected levels - the Riverfly Coordinator submits the data to The Riverfly Partnership
  - Drop below expected levels - a trigger level breach is declared, and the Riverfly Coordinator will be notified by email
    - i. The site will be immediately re-monitored in response to trigger level breach
    - ii. If the second dataset indicates a trigger-level breach, the Riverfly Coordinator notifies the Environment Agency who will take action to investigate the suspected pollution incident

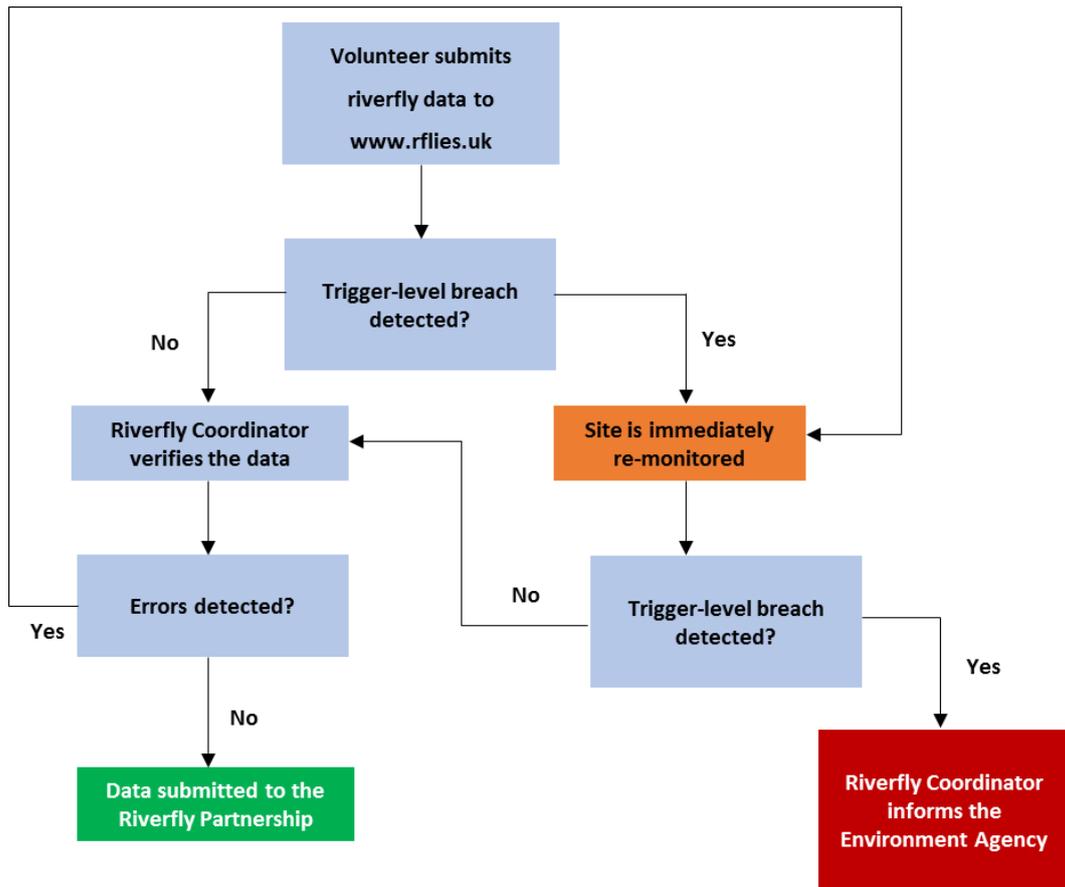


Figure 9 - Riverfly monitoring reporting methodology

#### 4.1.5 Volunteer recruitment

We aim to recruit twenty eight volunteers (two pairs of volunteers per site) to ensure that there are always enough monitors available in the event of volunteer absence (see Table 6). Each pair will monitor the site alternate months and can provide cover if the other pair is unable to survey.

	Per monitoring site	Across all 7 sites
Volunteers needed	4	28

Table 6 - Volunteer target numbers for riverfly monitoring in Watford

#### 4.1.6 Training requirements

The riverfly monitoring course content is set by the Riverfly Partnership and is standard throughout the UK (see Table 7).

Requirements	Per training session
Training duration	1 day
Training frequency	Once annually
Maximum volunteers trained per session	14
Qualified ARMI tutors required per session	2 (the lead tutor is the CVFC Chilterns, Herts and Middlesex Riverfly Coordinator)
Venue requirements	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity for 16 adults</li> <li>Proximity to river with sufficient numbers of riverflies for demonstrations</li> </ul>

Table 7 - ARMI training requirements

#### **4.1.7 Tools and equipment**

Equipment (waders and standard ARMI kit) will be supplied to each pair of volunteers on loan. All equipment must be returned when they stop volunteering. If equipment is not returned, volunteers must pay to replace the equipment.

#### **4.1.8 Reporting method**

Volunteer riverfly monitors will submit data online through the Chilterns, Herts and Middlesex Riverfly Hub website ([www.rflies.uk](http://www.rflies.uk)). Upon verification by the Riverfly Coordinator, the results are published online where they are available for public download. If the data cannot be verified, the Riverfly Coordinator will respond accordingly (see section 4.1.4.5).

#### 4.1.9 Timescale and coordination

The riverfly monitoring programme will be delivered by the Project Coordinator and CVFC Riverfly Coordinator. The roles and responsibilities of each delivery partner are summarised in Table 8.

Activity	Project Coordinator	Riverfly Coordinator	Frequency	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	
Volunteer training	Register new volunteers	Develop course content	1-2 times per year													
	Liaise with volunteers and CVFC	Deliver training														
	Organise logistics e.g. book venue	Process volunteer accreditation														
Facilitate monitoring sessions	Remote support for volunteers and CVFC	Supervise new volunteers	Monthly/ ongoing													
		Provide advice and guidance														→
	Cover volunteers with insurance	Ensure each site has been monitored at the agreed time														
Processing data		Collect data from volunteer monitors	Monthly													
		Verify data each month														→
	Remote support for volunteers and CVFC	Upload data to national database														
Generating report on findings	Write annual report	Export annual data and send to Project Coordinator	Each December													
	Present report at WWQF	Assist Project Coordinator with production of annual report														

**Table 8 - Roles and responsibilities of Project Coordinator and CVFC Riverfly Coordinator in the citizen science riverfly monitoring project**

#### 4.1.10 Budget

The riverfly monitoring programme will be delivered by the Project Coordinator and CVFC Riverfly Coordinator. The staff and equipment costs are outlined below in Table 9.

Activity	Project Coordinator Staff Time			CVFC Riverfly Coordinator			Equipment and materials				Expenses			
	Actions	Days	Cost	Actions	Days	Cost	Item	Units	Cost	Total	Item	Units	Cost	Total
Volunteer training	Liaise with volunteers and CVFC	2	£500.00	Prepare course content and materials	1	£75.00	Venue hire	2	£300.00	£600.00	Riverfly tutor travel to venue and collect equipment	2	20	£40.00
	Organise logistics	1	£250.00	Deliver training days	4	£300.00	Volunteer accreditation	28	£35.00	£980.00				
	Register new volunteers	2	£500.00	Post-course admin e.g. answer questions, process volunteer accreditations	1	£75.00	Participant packs	28	£7.00	£196.00				
							Consumables (refreshments etc)	1	£45.00	£45.00				
Monitoring Sessions	Remote support for volunteers and CVFC	6	£1,500.00	Onsite support for volunteers	14	£1,050.00	Waders	28	£100.00	£2,800.00	Project coordinator travel	12	5	£60.00
							RMI Kit (1 per pair) + £8 delivery cost	14	£97.00	£1,366.00	CVFC Coordinator travel	24	20	£480.00
													Volunteer travel	12
							Provision of replacement/spare riverfly kits already supplied by CVFC to volunteers who will fulfil role in Watford	8	£97.00	£776.00				
Data Analysis	Collation and analysis of data for annual report	3	£750.00	Verify monthly data	1	£75.00								
				Submit to national database	1	£75.00								
<b>Totals</b>		<b>14</b>	<b>£3,500.00</b>		<b>22</b>	<b>£1,650.00</b>				<b>£6,763.00</b>				<b>£2,260.00</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>£14,173</b>											
Project Coordinator day rate			£250.00											
CVFC day rate			£75.00											

Table 9 - Budget for riverfly monitoring project

## 4.2 Outfall Safari

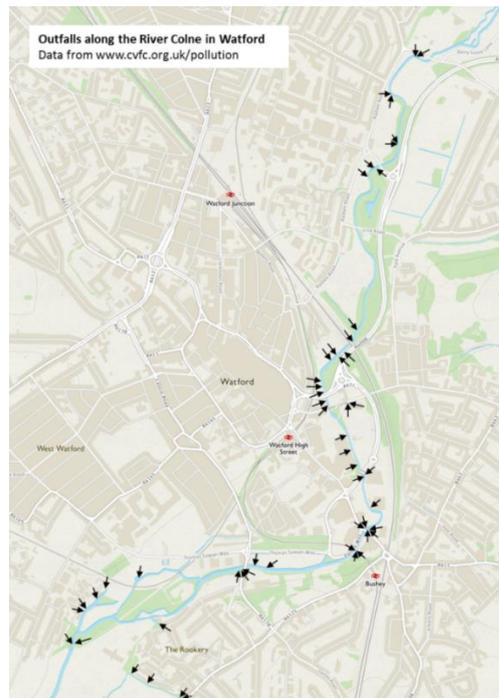
### 4.2.1 Introduction

Surface water outfalls are the discharge points for surface water from the surrounding urban area into the river. Outfalls can be a source of chronic pollution in urban rivers when wastewater makes its way into the surface water system through misconnected foul water outlets and other problems within the surface water drainage network.

Photographic evidence of sewage rag, litter and discoloured water recorded on the CVFC pollution reporting app shows that several outfalls along the Watford Colne pollute the river, compromising the biodiversity and amenity value of waterways (see Figures 10 - 12).



**Figure 10 - Polluting outfall in Watford. Discoloured water flows from the outfall. Sewage rag and litter collects behind temporary blocks installed by Thames Water.**



**Figure 11 - Polluting outfalls mapped along the Colne in Watford. Data from CVFC app.**

We propose to comprehensively map and assess all polluting outfalls along the River Colne in Watford using the Outfall Safari methodology. The Outfall Safari is a citizen science method developed by the Zoological Society of London (ZSL) in partnership with Thames Water and the Environment Agency to locate, assess the impact of, and report polluted surface water outfalls in rivers. The Outfall Safari is a partnership project that involves:

- The regulator i.e. Environment Agency
- The water company i.e. Thames Water
- The Catchment Partnership i.e. the Colne Catchment Action Network
- A host environmental non-environmental organisation i.e. Groundwork South
- Volunteer citizen scientists (only in year 4 after the completion of the first Outfall Safari by trained staff members)

## 4.2.2 Rationale

### 4.2.2.1 Existing monitoring effort

At present, a small circle of volunteers and local community groups use one or more of the following methods to report pollution incidents in the river in Watford:

1. Report directly to Thames Water's incident hotline
2. Report directly to the Environment Agency's incident hotline
3. Record on the Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative app - [www.cvfc.org.uk/pollution](http://www.cvfc.org.uk/pollution)

### 4.2.2.2 Challenges

Despite considerable volunteer efforts, outfalls in Watford are not well-documented due to the following challenges:

- The volunteer base is small therefore many outfalls into the Watford Colne are not monitored regularly and pollution incidents pass without being recorded
- Reporting pollution incidents can be arduous and confusing for members of the public as there are three reporting channels
- Issues surrounding water pollution are not well publicised or understood by members of the public



Figure 12 - Sewage rag caught on River Colne outfall in Watford

## 4.2.3 Aims and objectives

This project aims to launch the Outfall Safari in Watford to comprehensively record all polluting outfalls in the Watford Colne for the first time. The specific objectives of the Outfall Safari are:

1. To record and map the dry weather condition of surface water outfalls in rivers
2. To assess and rank the impact of the outfalls and report those that are polluting to the regulator (i.e. EA) and water company (i.e. Thames Water)
3. To build evidence on the scale of the polluted surface water outfalls problem and drive an increase in investment to resolve it
4. To engage communities with their local rivers and inspire change

#### 4.2.3.1 Outcomes

The survey data will form part of a suite of evidence to demonstrate whether undertaking the environmental monitoring activities, alongside other improvement works identified by the project, results in tangible improvements to water quality throughout Watford. Specifically, the Outfall Safari methodology outcomes are:

1. Identification of pollution ‘hot spots’ to enable Thames Water to prioritise their outfalls to be targeted in interventions e.g.:
  - Misconnections tracing
  - Developing better end-of-pipe solutions e.g. grilles/structures to capture sewage
  - Allocating polluting outfalls to the ‘surface water outfall programme’ (SWOP)
2. Inform wider catchment management decisions
3. Raise awareness surrounding misconnections

#### 4.2.4 Methodology

##### 4.2.4.1 Health and safety

The Outfall Safari will be conducted predominately from the bankside. In difficult-to-access areas, in-channel work may be required (see Figure 13). Only suitably trained personnel (not volunteers) covered by their organisation’s public liability insurance will take part in the first Outfall Safari.

Volunteers will be invited to take part in bankside assessments in subsequent Outfall Safaris (every 4 years) once the high-risk areas have been investigated and mapped by the project team.



Figure 13 – Bankside assessment (A) and, in-channel assessment (B). Source: A Guide to Running an Outfall Safari January 2019, ZSL and The Rivers Trust.

##### 4.2.4.2 Identify safe stretches of river

The River Colne will be divided into five sections to survey. Any areas deemed to be inaccessible or unsafe will be excluded. To ensure safe working in and around the river, a minimum of two surveyors will be required to survey each stretch of river at one time (see Table 11).

Areas to survey	Surveyors per survey area	Total surveyors per Outfall Safari
5	2	10

Table 10 - Surveyor numbers for Outfall Safari



Figure 14 - Discoloured water flowing from Oxhey Park outfall. Source: CCP CIC

#### 4.2.4.3 Scoring System

In dry weather only, trained surveyors will survey the river with a mobile app that allows them to geolocate, photograph and assess outfalls for evidence of pollution. The Environment Agency has developed a method for converting the assessment data to a numeric impact score for each outfall between 0 -20 (see Table 11 and Figure 15). The higher the score, the greater the visible impact of the outfall.

Table 11 - Outfall Safari scoring guidance

Question	Guidance	
GPS location	Record using mobile app	
Description of nearest landmark	Occasionally there can be issues with the accuracy of GPS – the more location detail that is provided, the easier it is for follow up action to be taken	
Which bank is the outfall on	This should be left or right as the surveyor stands looking downstream	
Question	Options	EA score
Ranking the flow coming out of the outfall	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• No flow</li> <li>• Trickle</li> <li>• Low flow</li> <li>• Moderate flow</li> <li>• High flow</li> </ul>	N/A
Ranking the visual impact of the outfall	No visible effect	0
	Within 2 m of outfall	2
	Impact 2 m – 10 m of outfall	4
	Impact 10 m – 30 m of outfall	6
	Impact greater than 30 m from outfall	10
Ranking the aesthetics of the outfall	No odour or visible aesthetics	0
	Faint smell, slight discolouration	2
	Mild smell, mild discolouration, small coverage of grey fungus	4
	Strong smell, strong discolouration, large coverage of grey fungus and/or litter	6
	Gross smell, gross sewage	10

#### 4.2.4.4 Reporting procedure for impact scores of ten or more

The Outfall Safari methodology specifies that outfalls that score 10 or higher require urgent attention and should be reported immediately to Thames Water.

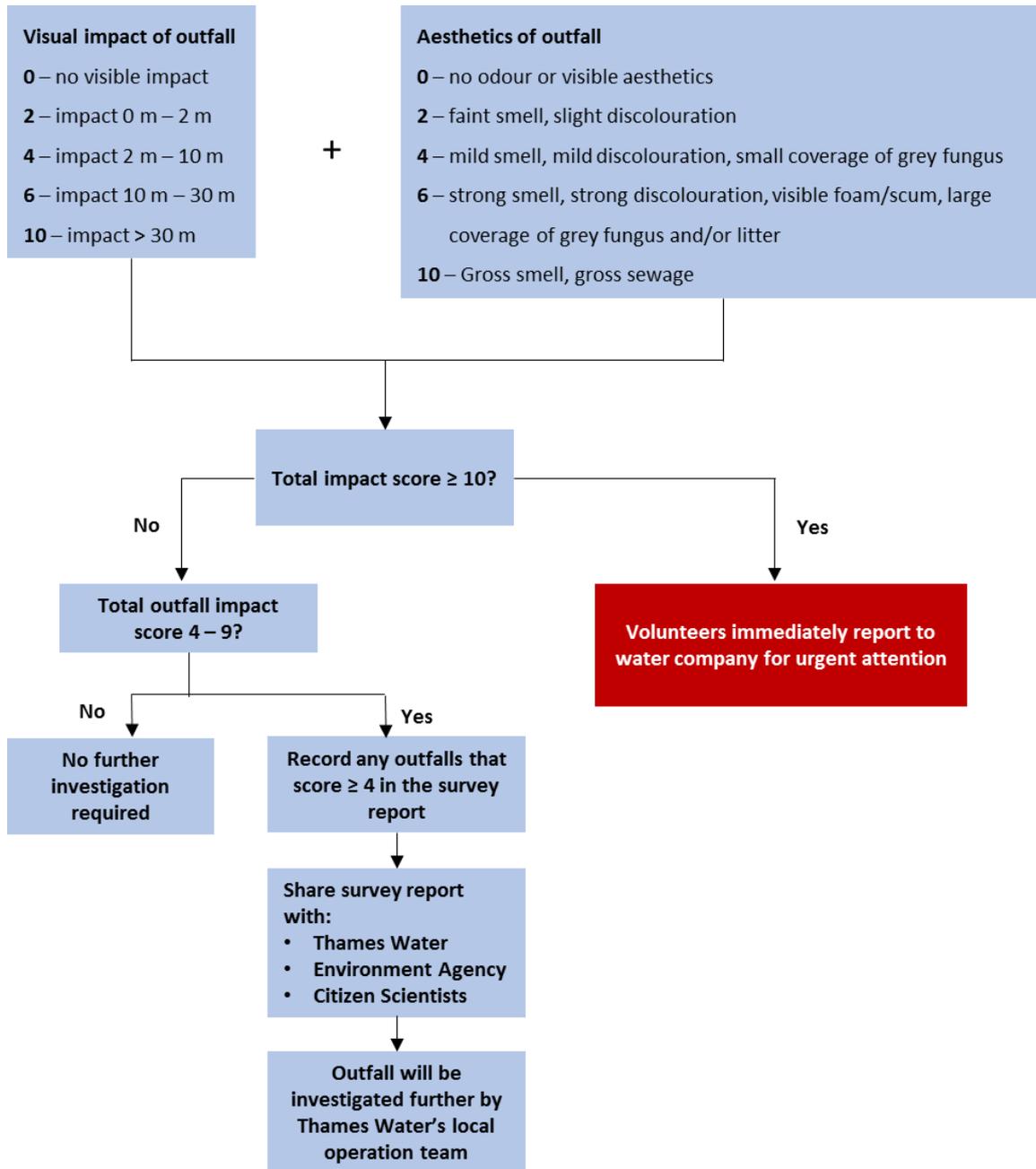


Figure 15 - Outfall Safari scoring protocol

#### 4.2.5 Volunteer recruitment

The first Outfall Safari will be conducted in-house by the Project Coordinator and 3-4 other project partners. The second Outfall Safari four years later will be rolled out to volunteers for health and safety reasons (see section 4.2.4.1).

#### 4.2.6 Tools and equipment

Surveyors will record all outfall data using the Epicollect app downloaded to smartphones.

The Project Coordinator will ensure surveyors are supplied with the necessary personal protective equipment and sanitary supplies:

- Waders
- Waterproof gloves
- Sanitary kit
- First aid kit
- Ranging pole



**Figure 16 - Personal protective equipment is provided to ensure safe working during the Outfall Safari. Source: A Guide to Running an Outfall Safari January 2019, ZSL and The Rivers Trust.**

#### 4.2.7 Reporting method

All data will be recorded on the Epicollect app managed by the Project Coordinator. After completion of the survey the data will be processed as follows:

1. The Project Coordinator will download and send the outfall data to the Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative (CVFC)
2. CVFC will map all outfall locations and their scores/photos onto the section of the CVFC app
3. The Project Coordinator will input the data into a report to be presented at the Watford Water Quality Forum

#### 4.2.8 Timescale and coordination

The Outfall Safari will be conducted by the Project Coordinator and project partners Community Connections Project CIC (CCP CIC) and the Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative (CVFC). The roles and responsibilities of each delivery partner is summarised in Table 12.

The Outfall Safari will be repeated in March every 4 years because:

- The extent to which outfalls are concealed by riparian vegetation is minimal in March
- 4 years is time interval Thames Water recommend to allow time for positive changes (e.g. resolving misconnections) to be made and take effect

Activity	Project Coordinator	CCP CIC & CVFC	TW & EA	Frequency	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Facilitate monitoring sessions	Conduct survey, provide administrative support for surveyors	Conduct survey	Provide advice and guidance	March												
Processing data	Manage data collection software	-	Provide advice and guidance	After survey - April												
	Verify and export data															
Generate report	Generate summary report	Participate in WWQF	Participate in WWQF	After survey - April												
	Present results to WWQF															

**Table 12 - Role of Project Coordinator, CCP CIC, CVFC, Thames Water (TW) and the Environment Agency (EA) in delivery of the Watford Colne Outfall Safari**

#### 4.2.9 Budget

The Outfall Safari will be conducted by the Project Coordinator, CCP CIC and CVFC. The staff and equipment costs are outlined below in Table 13.

Activity	Project Coordinator			CCP CIC			CVFC			Equipment and materials				Expenses				
	Action	Days	Cost	Action	Days	Cost	Action	Days	Cost	Item	Units	Cost	Total	Item	Units	Cost	Total	
Monitoring Sessions	Organise survey programme	5	£1,250.00							PPE	6	£100	£600.00	Project coordinator travel	3	10	£30.00	
	Conduct survey	3	£750.00	Conduct survey	3	£750.00	Conduct survey	3	£225.00					CC CIC travel	3	10	£30.00	
														CVFC travel	3	10	£30.00	
Data Analysis	Manage data collection software	2	£500.00															
	Verify, export and map data	3	£750.00															
<b>Totals</b>		13	<b>£3,250.00</b>		3	<b>£750.00</b>		3	<b>£225.00</b>				<b>£600.00</b>				<b>£90.00</b>	
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>£4,915.00</b>																	

Project Coordinator day rate	£250.00
CCP CIC day rate	£250.00
CVFC day rate	£75.00

**Table 13 - Staff and equipment costs for the Outfall Safari**

### 4.3 Water Chemical Analysis

#### 4.3.1 Introduction

Chemical analysis of river water samples can identify changes in water quality not detectable by eye. Chemical testing is sensitive and yields reliable and replicable water quality measurements. This quantitative technique serves as a useful complement to riverfly monitoring and qualitative Outfall Safari surveys.

#### 4.3.2 Rationale

##### 4.3.2.1 Existing monitoring effort

Since March 2018 the Environment Agency has undertaken monthly water chemical testing at Bushey Mill Lane (upstream of Watford) and Hampermill, Oxhey (downstream of Watford) (see Figure 17).

The results show that ammonia, found in human effluent, is more concentrated at the site downstream of Watford.

Concentrations of phosphate, a component of fertilisers and agricultural run-off, are variable at both monitoring sites with no clear trend (Figure 18 and Table 14).

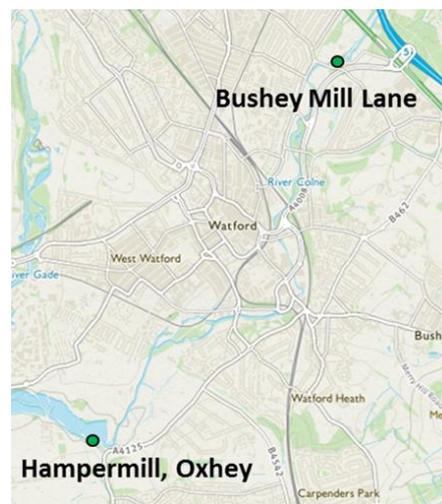


Figure 17 - Environment Agency chemical monitoring locations Bushey Mill Lane (upstream) and Hampermill, Oxhey (downstream)

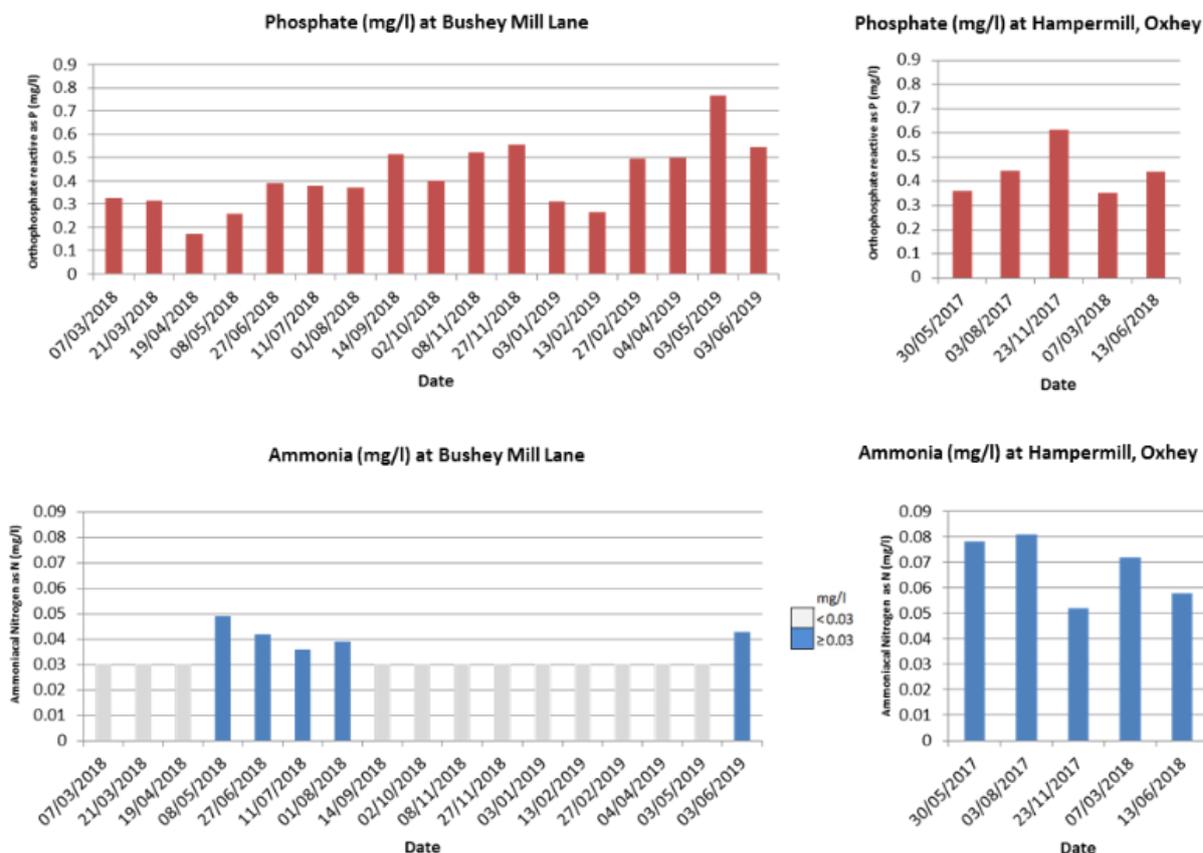


Figure 18 – Ammonia (red) and phosphate (blue) concentrations at Bushey Mill Lane (left) and Hampermill, Oxhey (right) (mg/l)

Chemical	Common name	Abbr.	Indicative of	Common sources	Concentration (mg/l)					
					Bushey Mill Lane - <i>upstream</i>			Hampermill, Oxhey - <i>downstream</i>		
					Min	Max	Mean	Min	Max	Mean
Ammoniacal nitrogen	Ammonia	A	Nutrient pollution	Effluent, sewage	< 0.03	0.05	0.01	0.05	0.08	0.07
Reactive phosphorous	Phosphate	P	Organic pollution	Agricultural run-off, fertilisers	0.17	0.77	0.43	0.35	0.61	0.44

**Table 14 - Concentrations of ammonia (A and phosphate (P) at Environment Agency monitoring sites upstream and downstream of Watford (mg/l)**

The Environment Agency also deploy sondes temporarily to investigate water quality levels in response to pollution incidents. Since February 2019, three sondes have been monitoring the Colne by an outfall near Water Lane.

#### 4.3.2.2 Challenges

While some chemical monitoring takes place upstream and downstream of Watford, the baseline water chemistry of River Colne as it flows through Watford is poorly understood.

#### 4.3.3 Aims and objectives

The aim of this project is to track water quality in the Colne as it flows through Watford. The specific objectives are to:

- Establish a volunteer-led water sampling programme in partnership with Thames Water
- Quantify levels of ammonia and phosphate at six new monitoring sites in Watford

The outcomes of this project will be to:

- Determine the baseline levels of ammonia and phosphate of the Colne through Watford
- Track the ecological status of the Colne in Watford in line with the ammonia and phosphate thresholds outlined in the Water Framework Directive
- Identify areas of poor water quality on the Colne
- Produce evidence to demonstrate whether any interventions, remedial works and habitat improvements results in tangible improvements to water quality throughout Watford



**Figure 19 - The River Colne flowing through Knutsford Playing Fields**

## 4.3.4 Methodology

### 4.3.4.1 Sample locations

We propose to measure water quality upstream of, within and downstream of Watford (Figure 20).



Figure 20 - Proposed water chemical testing sites

### 4.3.4.2 Record flow rate

All water samples are collected at any point over a sampling weekend (once each month).

Trained citizen scientists record surface flow velocity during sample collecting to enable chemical loadings to be calculated from the chemical concentration data.

#### Step 1 – Set up gauging station to calculate A (river cross sectional area)

- A reach of 3 – 5 m in length is identified with relatively linear features. Posts are installed to demarcate the reach
- A representative transect is taken from bank to bank within the reach, measuring depth every 0.5 m
- A depth gauge is installed into the bank on the transect
- A river cross sectional area (A) reading is taken by citizen scientists upon each site visit

#### Step 2 - Calculate V (surface flow velocity)

- A piece of floating material is used to measure flow rate ( $\text{ms}^{-1}$ ) between two markers

#### Step 3 – Calculate Q (flow rate)

$$Q(\text{m}^3 \text{ s}^{-1}) = 0.8 \times V (\text{ms}^{-1}) \times A (\text{m}^2)$$

#### 4.3.4.3 Collect and store water sample

Citizen scientists collect a water sample and store it in a cool bag and cooling kit at  $+5 \pm 3$  °C.

#### 4.3.4.4 Sample distribution

On the Sunday evening of the sampling weekend, one volunteer collects all six samples. New sampling bottles are dropped off as full bottles are collected.

Samples are stored overnight at  $+5 \pm 3$  °C and delivered by a volunteer to Maple Lodge Water Treatment Works where they are labelled and transferred to a fridge.

#### 4.3.4.5 Laboratory analysis

A refrigerated courier van collects the samples from Thames Water on Monday morning and delivers them to the Thames Water UKAS accredited laboratory in Reading.

#### 4.3.4.6 Circulate results

Thames Water issue a concentration data report to the Project Coordinator within two weeks of sample receipt. The report outlines AN and P loading using flow rate data calculated by citizen scientists (see section 4.3.4.2.).

#### 4.3.5 Volunteer recruitment

The project will recruit a new citizen science team consisting of twelve local volunteers (see Table 15). Community Connections Project CIC will also collect samples and coordinate the volunteers. Where possible, sites that overlap with riverfly monitoring sites were selected so that riverfly monitoring and chemical sampling could be undertaken simultaneously by a single pair of volunteers.

Site name	Riverfly site	Volunteers required
Cattle Drink	Yes – existing	2
Knutsford Playing Fields	Yes – existing	2
Radlett Road	No	2
Dalton Road	No	2
Lairage Land	Yes - new	2
Carpenders Park	Yes - existing	2
	Total	12

Table 15 - Volunteer target for water chemical monitoring

#### 4.3.6 Training requirements

Training for citizen scientists will be delivered by Thames Water, supported by the Environment Agency, and will involve some classroom and field elements (see Table 16).

Course content	
Water quality and identifying pollution types	
Consistent water sample collection	
Sample transfer and storage	
Consistent measurement of flow	
Recording and communication site measurements	
Health & safety	
Logistics	Per training session
Duration	1 day
Training frequency	Once annually
Volunteers trained per session	12
Delivery partners	Thames Water
	Environment Agency
Venue cost	None - training venue is provided by Thames Water

**Table 16 - Training requirements for water chemical monitors**

#### 4.3.7 Tools and equipment

Thames Water will provide all equipment required to:

- Collect, store and transport water samples (e.g. vials)
- Record flow (e.g. standard gauging board and flow velocity measurement system)

#### 4.3.8 Reporting method

Thames Water will generate the data in their laboratories each month. The data will be shared with the Project Coordinator each month, who will:

- Upload water quality data to the CVFC app:
  - Available for download by citizen scientists and members of the public
- Share the data with project partners:
  - At Watford Water Quality Forum (every 3 months)
  - In the annual water quality report (annually)
- Share the data with volunteers:
  - Circulate by email each month (volunteers will present the findings at the annual citizen science conference)

The Environment Agency water quality data for Bushey Mill Lane and Hampermill is available for public download at: <https://environment.data.gov.uk/water-quality/view/explore>

#### 4.3.9 Timescale and coordination

Citizen scientists will collect all 6 water samples over one sampling weekend each month and deliver them to Maple Lodge Water Treatment Works the following Monday. The programme will be delivered by the Project Coordinator, Community Connections Project CIC (CCP CIC) and Thames Water. The roles and responsibilities of each delivery partner is summarised in Table 17.

Activity	Project Coordinator	CCP CIC	Thames Water	Frequency	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Volunteer training	Liase with volunteer surveyors	Attend training	Supply venue	Once annually (exact month TBC)												
	Liase with Thames Water to coordinate logistics	-	Develop course content													
			Deliver training													
Facilitate monitoring sessions	Remote administrative support for volunteers	Collect samples and lead volunteers	Advice and guidance	Monthly												
			Provide equipment													
Processing data	Review data from TW and liase with CVFC to upload to website	-	Send data to Project Coordinator	Monthly												
Generate report	Input chemical analysis data into annual water quality report in December	-	Participate in WWQF	Report produced Annually (December)												
	Present data to WWQF															

Table 17 - Role of Project Coordinator CCP CIC and Thames Water in the water chemical testing programme

### 4.3.10 Budget

The staff and equipment costs for the water chemical testing programme are outlined below in Table 18.

Activity	Project Coordinator			Thames Water			CCP CIC			Equipment and materials				Expenses					
	Action	Days	Cost	Actions	Days	Cost	Action	Days	Cost	Item	Units	Cost	Total	Item	Units	Cost	Total		
Volunteer training	Facilitate annual training session	1	£250.00	Train volunteers in methodology	1	£0				Venue hire	1	£0	£0.00						
	Promote event to volunteers	1	£250.00																
	Register new volunteers	1	£250.00																
Monitoring Sessions	Remote support for volunteers and partners	6	£1,500.00	Remote support for volunteers and partners	5	£0	Collect samples and transport to Thames Water	12	£3,000.00	PPE	6	£100	£600.00	Project coordinator travel	12	5	£60.00		
															CC CIC travel	12	10	£120.00	
Data Analysis	Collation and analysis of data for annual report	3	£750.00	Analyse Data	1														
				Liaise with project coordinator	1														
<b>Totals</b>		12	<b>£3,000.00</b>		8	<b>£0</b>			<b>£3,000.00</b>				<b>£600.00</b>				<b>£1,860.00</b>		
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>£8,460.00</b>																		

Project Coordinator day rate	£250.00
CCP CIC day rate	£250.00

Table 18 - Staff and equipment costs for the water chemical testing programme

## 4.4 Geomorphological surveys

### 4.4.1 Introduction

Geomorphological surveys measure habitat diversity, physical habitat and the hydromorphological functioning of a river and its margins.

The Modular River Physical Survey (MoRPh) is a geomorphological survey developed for Citizen Scientists. The survey supports the Catchment Based Approach and river stewardship for Catchment Partnerships and is now being more widely adopted for river assessment and monitoring. The methodology is recognised by statutory bodies such as the Environment Agency and is the preferred citizen science method of undertaking hydromorphological surveys on rivers nationally.



Figure 21 - Habitat variability along the River Colne in Watford.

### 4.4.2 Rationale

#### 4.4.2.1 Existing survey efforts

The MultiMoRPh survey methodology was used by the Rediscovering the River Colne project team to assess the baseline condition of the river at all 7 proposed river improvement sites in Watford in 2019.

Repeat MultiMoRPh surveys are required to monitor any changes to the river channel over time after the completion of the practical habitat improvements undertaken in workstream 1 of the Rediscovering the River Colne project.

#### 4.4.2.2 Challenges

A team of local people need to be trained in the MoRPh methodology in order to track the ecological and geomorphological condition of the river over time.

### 4.4.3 Aims

The aim of the project is to launch an annual citizen science MoRPh survey programme to monitor the condition of the river after completion of the habitat improvement works. The objectives are to:

- Train new volunteer citizen scientists in the MoRPh survey methodology and support annual surveys at the 7 river improvement sites along the Colne in Watford
- Produce annual reports that detail the ecological and hydromorphological function of the river
- Raise awareness about river ecology and geomorphology within the local community

The outcomes of the surveys will be to:

- Identify which sections of river have improved or declined in condition
- Indicate the extent that the river improvement works were successful
- Identify any new threats or challenges impacting the river’s geomorphology
- Identify additional land management recommendations for landowners and land managers

#### 4.4.4 Methodology

##### 4.4.4.1 On-site measurements

At each of the seven river improvement sites, the rivers will be sampled at ten lengths (modules) by pairs of trained surveyors. Each set of ten modules takes approximately seven hours (i.e. one working day) to survey.

The following parameters are recorded within each of the ten contiguous MoRPh surveys to ascertain scores for each subreach of the river based on a series of sixteen indices (see Table 29).

Characteristics	Parameters
Channel dimensions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Left bank height</li> <li>2. Right bank height</li> <li>3. Bankfull width</li> <li>4. Water width</li> <li>5. Water depth</li> </ol>
The left and right bank top (10 m back from the bank edge)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Artificial / managed ground cover</li> <li>2. Natural / lightly managed ground cover</li> <li>3. Bank top water related features</li> </ol>
The left and right bank face (includes margins of the water-filled channel)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Bank face profile</li> <li>2. Bank face materials</li> <li>3. Bank face channel margin features</li> <li>4. Bank face / channel margin vegetation</li> </ol>
The channel bed	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Channel bed materials</li> <li>2. Water surface type</li> <li>3. Channel bed features</li> <li>4. Channel bed vegetation</li> </ol>

**Table 19 - MoRPh survey parameters recorded by citizen scientists**

The data from each survey is used to generate scores for 16 indices that illustrate the current condition of the river channel and riparian zone, in addition to scoring the level of human pressure affecting the watercourse. This allows for any subsequent improvement or detriment to the river to be fully monitorable.

Characteristics	Indices	
	Index no	Measurement
Channel	1	Number of present/extensive flow types
	2	Highest energy present/extensive flow type
	3	Number of present/extensive bed material types
	4	Coarsest present/extensive mineral bed material type
	5	Average alluvial bed material size (phi units)
	6	Average alluvial bed material size class
	7	Extent of superficial bed siltation
	8	Channel physical habitat complexity
	9	Number of aquatic vegetation morphotypes
Riparian (Bank Face and Bank Top)	10	Average riparian physical habitat complexity
	11	Maximum riparian physical habitat complexity
	12	Riparian vegetation structural complexity
Human pressures and impacts	13	Degree of human pressure imposed by bank top land cover
	14	Channel reinforcement
	15	Non-native invasive plant species extent
	16	Number of non-native invasive plant species

**Table 20 - River condition scores generated by citizen science data**



**Figure 22 - Different channel dimensions and margin vegetation along the Colne in Watford**

#### 4.4.5 Volunteer recruitment

Local people will be encouraged to volunteer as citizen scientists. University students may be interested in conducting surveys, particularly students from Queen Mary University (where the survey was developed).

Number of sites	Survey days per site	Surveyors per site	Total surveyor days
7	1	2	14

**Table 21 – Days required to survey all seven river improvement sites**

#### 4.4.6 Training requirements

Each volunteer must complete the 'Introduction to MoRPh' training programme offered by Queen Mary University in order to learn how to conduct a MoRPh survey and gain access to the MoRPh database (see Table 22). Up to ten volunteers can be trained in one session.

Requirement	Per training session
Training duration	1 day
Training frequency	Once annually
Volunteers trained per session	Up to 10
Delivery partners	Queen Mary University
Venue requirements	Provided by Queen Mary University in London
Training cost	£600 for up to 10 trainees

Table 22 - Training requirements for MoRPh survey volunteers

#### 4.4.7 Tools and equipment

The following materials are required to complete the survey:

- MoRPh survey sheets and code sheet Waterproof clip board
- Mobile phone with GPS App and camera
- Length measuring device (e.g. expandable metal 5-10 m tape)
- A ranging pole to help your stability and as a measuring device
- Waders, waterproof clothing and safety equipment appropriate to working on riverbanks

#### 4.4.8 Reporting method

The Project Coordinator will export the data annually and produce an annual report which will:

- Be circulated to all relevant stakeholders and riparian landowners and land managers along the river Colne in Watford
- Identify any additional land management recommendations as they arise

#### 4.4.9 Timeline and coordination

The geomorphological surveyors will be coordinated by the Project Coordinator (see Table 23). The surveys will be conducted 1-2 years after river improvement works have taken place in order to allow time for any changes to take effect. The surveys will be repeated annually to record changes that occur over time. The survey will take place in June as this is the month where key botanical species, notably invasive species, are most visible.

Activity	Project Coordinator	Frequency	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Volunteer training	Liaise with volunteer surveyors	Once annually in May												
	Liaise with MoRPh trainers to organise training													
Facilitate monitoring sessions	Remote administrative support for volunteers	Throughout June												
Processing data	Remote administrative support for volunteers	June - July												
Generate report	Generate geomorphology report	July - August												
	Circulate report to relevant partners													

**Table 23 - Project Coordinator roles and responsibilities for MoRPh surveys**

#### 4.4.10 Budget

The staff and equipment costs for the MoRPh survey programme are outlined below in Table 24.

Activity	Project Coordinator			Training Costs			Staff and Volunteer Expenses		
	Action	Days	Cost	Action	Cost	Total	Action	Cost	Total
Volunteer training	Facilitate annual training session	2	£500.00	Training Course for 10 volunteers	£600	£600.00	Travel expenses for 10 volunteers	£200	£200.00
	Register new volunteers	1	£250.00				Travel expenses for project coordinator	£20	£20.00
Monitoring Sessions	Coordinate annual survey programme	5	£1,250.00	PPE for 10 volunteers	£100	£1,000	Travel expenses for 10 volunteers	£200	£200.00
	Onsite support for volunteers	5	£1,250.00				Travel expenses for project coordinator	£20	£20.00
Data Analysis	Provide remote support for volunteers using Cartographer	3	£750.00						
	Export annual data for production of report	1	£250.00						
Reporting	Produce annual MoRPh report	1	£250.00						
<b>Totals</b>		<b>18</b>	<b>£4,500.00</b>			<b>£1,600.00</b>			<b>£440.00</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>£6,540.00</b>						

Project Coordinator day rate	£250.00
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Table 24 - Staff, training and equipment costs for MoRPh surveys

## 4.5 Non-native invasive plant species

### 4.5.1 Introduction

The colonisation of riparian habitats by non-native invasive plant species has a range of negative impacts on the River Colne including:

1. Reduction in biodiversity of flora and fauna
2. Disrupted geomorphology
3. Risk to public health (i.e. Giant Hogweed)

The Colne in Watford suffers from the invasion of three non-native plant species (see Table 25 and Figure 23).

Common name	Scientific name	Impact
Himalayan Balsam	<i>Impatiens glandulifera</i>	Can promote bank erosion through dieback and subsequent destruction of bankside structure
		Dense stands can impede water flow at times of high rainfall, thereby increasing the likelihood of flooding
		Reduces biodiversity as it shades out and crowds out native plants
Giant Hogweed	<i>Heracleum mantegazzianum</i>	May form dense stands reducing riparian species diversity
		Produces phytotoxic sap which burns human skin exposed to UV radiation i.e. sunlight
Japanese Knotweed	<i>Fallopia japonica</i>	Alteration in habitat structure and biological communities is known to impact directly on salmonid fisheries
		Its presence poses great management and access concerns if left uncontrolled (The Living River Project - The River Avon System Non-native Invasive Plant Strategy).

**Table 25 - Impact of the invasion of Himalayan Balsam, Giant Hogweed and Japanese Knotweed on riparian habitats**



**Figure 23 - Invasive plant species in British rivers. Left: Himalayan Balsam. Centre: Giant Hogweed. Right: Japanese Knotweed. Photos from Non-Native Species Secretariat (<http://www.nonnativespecies.org>)**

## 4.5.2 Rationale

### 4.5.2.1 Existing monitoring effort

The CVFC mobile app is used to record the presence of invasive plant species across the Colne catchment and, with the support of the Environment Agency, will soon be rolled out for use in other catchments (<http://cvfc.org.uk/nnis/>).

### 4.5.2.2 Challenges

Community groups Green Gym and Community Connections Project CIC currently conduct some removal of these plants (see Figure 24) and record their presence on their facebook page, however no group is strategically mapping and assessing the severity of invasive species in Watford.



Figure 24 - Control of invasive plant species in the Watford Colne by Community Connections Project CIC

## 4.5.3 Aims and objectives

We propose to establish a new robust citizen science invasive plant species monitoring programme for the River Colne in Watford. The objectives are to:

- Recruit a new team of volunteer citizen scientists and train them in invasive plant species identification
- Map the locations and assess the severity of all invasive plant populations along the Colne in Watford before and after river improvement works

Outcomes:

- Gain a comprehensive understanding of the baseline burden of invasive plants in Watford for the first time
- Additional land management recommendations may be identified for:
  - Riparian land managers
  - Riparian landowners
  - Community interest groups (e.g. Green Gym)
- Raise awareness within the local community about the impact of invasive species

#### 4.5.4 Methodology

Eight sites along the Colne in Watford will be surveyed for invasive species throughout June (Table 26 and Figure 25).



Figure 25 - Invasive plant species survey sites: 7 river improvement sites plus the town centre

Site no.	Site name	Site information
1	Knutsford Playing Fields	River improvement site
2	Timberlake Allotments	River improvement site
3	Radlett Road Playing Fields	River improvement site
4	Waterfields Recreation Ground	River improvement site
5	Town Centre	Few ecological records exist as access is limited
6	Oxhey Park	River improvement site
7	Riverside Recreation Ground	River improvement site
8	Lairage Land	River improvement site

Table 26 - Invasive plant species survey sites in Watford

Surveyors will walk the length of the survey area, recording details about invasive species as they are observed. Citizen scientists will record invasive species by:

- Inputting data directly into the CVFC app using their smartphones (see Table 27)
- Recording on paper - any surveyors that do not have access to a smartphone can opt to record data onto a paper map and pass on to the Project Coordinator to upload onto the CVFC app

Question	Response
Location	Grid reference is automatically generated using the app's geolocation feature
Invasive species type	Surveyors select from the list: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Giant Hogweed</li> <li>• Himalayan Balsam</li> </ul> Japanese Knotweed
Catchment	Volunteers select 'Colne' catchment
Water type	Surveyors select 'River Cone'
Set marker	Surveyor selects if invasive species is on left or right bank (as you look downstream)
Severity	Volunteers will record area covered by invasive species: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minor (&lt;10 m<sup>3</sup>)</li> <li>• Moderate (10 – 50)</li> <li>• Bad (50 – 100 m<sup>3</sup>)</li> <li>• Severe (100 -150 m<sup>3</sup>)</li> <li>• Very severe (&gt;150 m<sup>3</sup>)</li> </ul>
Submitted by	Surveyor enters their full name
Phone number	Surveyor enters phone number in case a follow-up call is required to verify details
Organisation	Surveyor enters organisation e.g. Watford Colne Citizen Scientist
Description	Surveyor provides details about the incident e.g.
Photo	Survey uploads photograph of invasive species

**Table 27 - Invasive species assessment form on CVFC app**

#### 4.5.5 Volunteer recruitment

To gain full visibility of riparian vegetation, volunteers will sometimes be required to wade in-channel, therefore citizen scientists will survey in pairs to ensure safe working by the river. Eight volunteer pairs will be required to cover all sites (see Table 28).

Surveyors per site	Total sites	Total surveyors required
2	8	16

**Table 28 - Volunteer target for invasive plant species surveys**

The Project Coordinator will develop a monitoring programme and will recruit volunteer surveyors from the local community. Community Connections Project CIC will receive the monitoring programme and liaise with volunteers to conduct monitoring sessions accordingly.

#### 4.5.6 Training requirements

Citizen scientists will receive one day of invasive species training delivered by the Project Coordinator, CVFC and Community Connections Project CIC (see Table 29). Surveyors will be trained in:

- An introduction to invasive species ecology
- Invasive species identification
- Reporting invasive species using the CVFC app
- Methods of control – best practice

Requirement	Per session
Training duration	1 day
Training frequency	Once annually in May
Volunteers trained per session	16
Delivery partners	Project Coordinator - Groundwork South
	Community Connections Project CIC
	CVFC
Venue requirements	Classroom with access to river for site visit

**Table 29 - Training requirements for invasive species citizen scientists**

#### 4.5.7 Tools and equipment

Surveyors will use smartphones to record data. Personal protective equipment will be supplied to enable surveyors to walk in-channel:

- Waders
- Waterproof gloves
- Sanitary kit
- First aid kit
- Ranging pole

#### 4.5.8 Reporting method

Upon completion of the survey, CVFC will collate all data and send to the Project Coordinator and Community Connections Project CIC. The project coordinator will produce a report which:

- Details the locations and prevalence of each invasive species at each survey site
- Identifies land management recommendations for control of invasive species

The project coordinator will also update the [Herts Environmental Records Centre](#) annually with the most recent invasive species records.

Community Connections Project CIC will:

- Undertake all control works as part of their existing contract with Watford Borough Council

Note that timing is crucial for removal of Himalayan Balsam - this plant must be removed before it sets seed mid/end-July.

#### 4.5.9 Timescale and coordination

The surveyors will be coordinated by the Project Coordinator and Community Connections Project CIC (see Table 30). The surveys will take place in June as this is the month where invasive plant species are most visible.

Activity	Project Coordinator	CCP CIC	CVFC	Frequency	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Volunteer training	Liaise with volunteer surveyors	Assist with delivery of training session	-	Once annually in May												
	Organise training e.g. book venue, develop course content		-													
Facilitate monitoring sessions	Remote administrative support for volunteers	Facilitate annual survey sessions	-	Throughout June												
Processing data	Remote administrative support for volunteers		Technical support with app as required	June - July												
Generate report	Generate invasive plant report	Collate data and produce management recommendations	Export data from CVFC app for Project Coordinator	Deadline 30 <sup>th</sup> June												
	Circulate report to relevant partners															
Invasive species removal	-	Facilitate annual removal session as part of existing agreement with WBC	-	July - August												

**Table 30 - Roles and responsibilities of Project Coordinator, Community Connections Project and CVFC in the invasive plant species project**

#### 4.5.10 Budget

The staff and equipment costs for the invasive plant species programme are outlined below in Table 31.

Activity	Project Coordinator Staff Time			Community Connections Projects			Equipment and materials				Expenses			
	Actions	Days	Cost	Actions	Days	Cost	Item	Units	Cost	Total	Item	Units	Cost	Total
Volunteer training	Prepare course content and materials	2	£500.00	Assist with delivery of training session	1	£250.00	Venue hire	1	£300	£300.00	Project coordinator travel	1	5	£5.00
	Facilitate training session	1	£250.00				Printed materials	1	£20	£20.00	CCP CIC travel	1	5	£5.00
	Register new volunteers	1	£250.00											
Monitoring Sessions	Produce Monitoring Programme	1	£250.00	Facilitate annual survey sessions	7	£1,750.00					CCP CIC travel	7	5	£35.00
	Promote survey sessions to trained volunteers	1	£250.00										Volunteer travel	20
Data Analysis				Collate data and produce management recommendations	1	£250.00								
Reporting				Produce annual invasive species report with management recommendations	2	£500.00								
NNIS Removal Sessions	Promote removal sessions to all volunteers	1	£250.00	Facilitate annual removal session as part of existing agreement with WBC (costs are covered existing agreement with WBC)	14	£0.00								
<b>Totals</b>		<b>7</b>	<b>£1,750.00</b>			<b>£2,750.00</b>				<b>£320.00</b>				<b>£145.00</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>£4,965.00</b>											

Project Coordinator day rate	£250.00
CCP CIC day rate	£250.00

**Table 31 - Staff and equipment costs for the invasive plant species monitoring programme**

## 4.6 Dragonfly and damselfly monitoring

### 4.6.1 Introduction

The presence of dragonflies and damselflies, collectively known as Odonata, is an important indicator of ecological balance (see Figure 26). These insects lay their eggs in or near freshwater, therefore their presence in an area is a good indicator of water quality. They thrive in sites that contain diversity of microhabitats and are highly vulnerable to pollution and human perturbation, therefore are also a good indicator of habitat quality.



Figure 26 - Dragonfly (left) and damselfly (right) captured by Hertfordshire Natural History Society

### 4.6.2 Rationale

#### 4.6.2.1 Existing volunteer effort

Volunteers associated with the Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT) and Hertfordshire Natural History Society (HNHS) have recorded 24 species of dragonflies and damselflies in Hertfordshire to date.

#### 4.6.2.2 Challenges

Few dragonfly and damselfly records are held for Watford, therefore the diversity and abundance of these species along this section of the River Colne is poorly understood.

### 4.6.3 Aims and Objectives

This project aims to produce the first comprehensive survey of dragonflies and damselflies along the River Colne in Watford. The objectives of the project are:

- To train and support local volunteers in Odonata identification and survey techniques
- To measure the diversity and distribution of Odonata along the River Colne and associated wetland habitats in Watford

The outcomes of the project are:

- To produce information about water quality and habitat to guide prioritisation for future enhancements
- To produce baseline biodiversity data that will inform for future monitoring activities
- To contribute to the Hertfordshire dragonfly atlas

#### 4.6.4 Methodology

Surveyors will follow the methodology provided through the Hertfordshire Dragonfly Atlas Survey. At the time of writing the methodology has not been finalised – information below is adapted from the London Wildlife Trust Dragonfly Atlas.

##### 4.6.4.1 Survey period

Surveys will take place between June and July.

##### 4.6.4.2 Survey conditions

Surveyors will record dragonflies and damselflies;

- Between 10:00 – 16:00 (when these invertebrates are most active)
- During sunny weather with cloud cover less than 60% and no rain
- When wind is low (<18 mph)
- When the temperature is between 17°C - 30°C

##### 4.6.4.3 Habitat selection

Surveyors will count dragonflies and damselflies:

- Along the full length of River Colne in Watford from Knutsford Playing Fields (North) to Lairage Land (South)
- In all adjacent water bodies (e.g. brooks, backwaters)
- In all other areas that might provide habitat e.g. riverside paths

The surveyors will record observations about the site e.g. disturbance, water level and pollution.

##### 4.6.4.4 Counting dragonflies and damselflies

Surveyors will record the:

- Number of dragonflies and damselflies seen
- Species of dragonflies and damselflies seen
- Activity of each dragonfly and damselfly e.g. flight, resting, mating, egg-laying
- Life-stage of each dragonfly and damselfly

#### 4.6.5 Volunteer recruitment

Surveyors will work in pairs to cover seven project areas (Table 32). Volunteers will be sought via the partners' networks and Hertfordshire Natural History Society.

Minimum surveyors per site	Number of sites	Total number of surveyors
2	7	14

Table 32 - Volunteer target for dragonfly and damselfly surveys

#### 4.6.6 Training requirements

Hertfordshire and Middlesex Wildlife Trust will run a training course for all new volunteers which will include a classroom talk followed by field work.

#### 4.6.7 Tools and equipment

Volunteers will be supplied with binoculars, a map, notebook and a survey sheet.

#### **4.6.8 Reporting method**

Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust will produce an annual report which:

- Outlines the distribution of each species
- Identifies any land management recommendations or river improvements

Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust will pass the results of surveys to the Hertfordshire Dragonfly Recorder, who will submit the data to:

- Hertfordshire Environmental Records Centre
- Hertfordshire Dragonfly Atlas

#### 4.6.9 Timescale and coordination

The surveyors will be trained and coordinated by the Herts and Middlesex Wildlife Trust (HMWT), with support from the Project Coordinator (see Table 33).

Activity	Project Coordinator	HMWT	Frequency	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Volunteer training	Register new volunteers	Deliver training	Once annually												
Facilitate monitoring sessions	Remote support for volunteers and HMWT	Onsite supervision and guidance	June - July												
Processing data	-	Collect and analyse data	October												
Generate report	-	Generate annual report	November												

**Table 33 - Roles and responsibilities of the Project Coordinator and HMWT for dragonfly and damselfly monitoring**

#### 4.6.10 Budget

The staff and equipment costs for the dragonfly and damselfly monitoring project are outlined below in Table 34.

Activity	Project Coordinator Staff Time			HMWT			Equipment and materials				Expenses			
	Actions	Days	Cost	Actions	Days	Cost	Item	Units	Cost	Total	Item	Units	Cost	Total
Volunteer training				Prepare course content and materials	2	£500.00					Project coordinator travel			
	Register new volunteers	1	£250.00				Venue hire	1	£300	£300.00		1	5	£5.00
	Assist HMWT with course development	1	£250.00	Deliver training day	1	£250.00	Printed materials	1	£40	£40.00	Volunteer travel	14	5	
				Post-course admin e.g. circulate materials, answer questions	2	£500.00	Refreshments	1	£40	£40.00				
Monitoring Sessions	Remote support for volunteers and HMWT	2	£500.00	Onsite supervision and guidance for new surveyors (0.5 day per survey pair)	7	£1,750.00	ID & recording sheets	7	£10	£70.00	Volunteer travel	14	5	£70.00
							Binoculars	7	£150	£1,050.00	HMWT travel	14	5	£70.00
												Project coordinator travel	12	5
Data Analysis				Collate data and analyse data	3	£750.00								
				Produce annual report	3	£750.00								
<b>Totals</b>		4	<b>£1,000.00</b>			<b>£3,750.00</b>				<b>£1,500.00</b>				<b>£275.00</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>	<b>£6,525.00</b>													

Project Coordinator day rate	£250.00
HMWT officer day rate	£250.00

**Table 34 - Staff and equipment costs for dragonfly and damselfly monitoring**

## 4.7 Fish populations

### 4.7.1 Introduction

Electrofishing is a method used regularly by the Environment Agency to monitor fish populations (see Figure 27).

It is the process of catching fish by creating an electrical field through water. This stimulates the nervous system, causing the fish to swim in a specified direction until immobilised and caught by the surveyor. Fish are not harmed during this process.

The Environment Agency conduct electrofishing as part of their National Monitoring Programme in accordance with the Water Framework Directive sampling programme.



Figure 27 - Environment Agency recording fish caught by electrofishing (source [www.gov.uk](http://www.gov.uk))

### 4.7.2 Rationale

To complement the citizen science monitoring activities, the Environment Agency has extended its fish population surveys in Watford from one to three sites from 2020 (see Figure 28):

1. Radlett Road Playing Fields
2. TESCO Extra (new site)
3. Lairage Land (new site)

Volunteer citizen scientists will be invited to observe the surveys and access the results.



Figure 28 - Electrofishing sites in Watford

### 4.7.3 Aims and objectives

This project aims to increase the fish population survey effort in Watford and to open the surveys up for observation by local people. The objectives are to:

- Obtain baseline data about fish populations in Watford:
  - Species composition
  - Relative abundance
  - Size distribution
  - Biomass
- Introduce Watford residents to local statutory environmental monitoring programmes

The outcomes are:

- To identify any changes in fish populations that occur as a result of habitat improvement works
- To identify any additional habitat improvements required

## **4.7.4 Methodology**

### **4.7.4.1 Frequency**

The survey will be conducted once annually per site before river improvement works take place and then 2-3 times annually upon completion of habitat improvements.

### **4.7.4.2 Sample collection**

Using an electricity generator which is dragged behind on a boat as they walk, Environment Agency staff will temporarily immobilise the surrounding fish.

Electrofishing uses direct current electricity flowing between a submerged cathode and anode. This affects the movement of the fish so that they swim toward the anode, where they can be caught by the team conducting the survey and recorded appropriately.

All sampling follows procedures to protect held fish. Air pumps and water transfers are used as necessary to maintain safe conditions. Large fish are kept separate from smaller prey-size fish to avoid predation during containment.

### **4.7.4.3 Sample analysis**

The Environment Agency currently undertake qualitative sampling which is used to determine species composition, relative abundance, size distribution and biomass. The results of the surveys are used to make management recommendations for specific sites and to evaluate the overall condition of fish populations across the Colne Catchment.

## **4.7.5 Reporting method**

The Environment Agency will analyse all datasets and publish them:

- In an annual report for stakeholders
- In the online open-access National Fish Population Database

#### 4.7.6 Timeline and coordination

Fish population surveys will be conducted by the Environment Agency. The Project Coordinator will advertise the surveys to citizen scientists and circulate the findings to the citizen science network and relevant partners (see Table 35).

Activity	Project Coordinator	Environment Agency	Frequency	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Facilitate monitoring sessions	Advertise monitoring to public and citizen science network	Deliver monitoring sessions with in-house staff	1-3 times per year												
Processing data	-	Analyse data	1-3 times per year												
Generate report	Circulate report to citizen science network and relevant partners	Generate report and sent to Project Coordinator	1-3 times per year												

**Table 35 - Roles and responsibilities of the Project Coordinator and Environment Agency in the fish population surveys**

#### 4.7.7 Budget

The Environment Agency will cover all costs for the fish population surveys in Watford. The Project Coordinator can advertise the surveys and circulate the results to citizen scientists for no additional cost (see Table 36).

Activity	Project Coordinator Staff Time			Environment Agency	
	Actions	Days	Cost	Actions	Cost
Monitoring Sessions	Advertise surveys to citizen science network	0.5	£0.00	Conduct surveys	£0.00
Data Analysis	Circulate annual report to citizen scientists and relevant stakeholders	0.5	£0.00	Collate data and analyse data	£0.00
				Produce annual report	£0.00
<b>Totals</b>		<b>1</b>	<b>£0.00</b>		<b>£0.00</b>
<b>Grand Total</b>			<b>£0.00</b>		

Table 36 - Costs for fish surveys in Watford

## 5 Project Budget

### 5.1 Project Coordinator

#### 5.1.1 Project Administration

The Project Coordinator will administer the Environmental Monitoring Project as a whole and coordinate all volunteer citizen scientists. Annual Project Coordinator staff costs are summarised in Table 37 based on a rate of £250 per day.

Task	Days per year	Annual cost
Develop promotion and recruitment strategy	3	£750
Attend community events to recruit volunteers and promote project	3	£750
Register new volunteers and provide administrative support	3	£750
Publish promotional material via agreed media channels	3	£750
Manage social media interactions and enquiries	3	£750
Manage citizen science network and communications	3	£750
Coordinate annual citizen science forum	5	£1,250
<b>Total</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>£4,500</b>

**Table 37 - Project Coordinator costs for project administration**

#### 5.1.2 Watford Water Quality Forum

The Project Coordinator will facilitate the quarterly Watford Water Quality Forum (WWQF) meetings and produce the annual water quality report which details the results of the:

- Riverfly surveys
- Outfall Safari
- Water chemical analyses

The costs for these activities are outlined in Table 38 based on the rate of £250 per day.

Task	Days per year	Annual cost
Facilitate Watford Water Quality Forum meetings	8	£2,000
Produce annual water quality report	10	£2,500
<b>Total</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>£4,500</b>

**Table 38 - Project Coordinator staff costs for facilitating the WWQF**

### 5.1.3 Project Coordinator Timeline

The activities of the Project Coordinator throughout the year are summarised in Table 39. In summary, the Project Coordinator will:

- Support citizen scientists and project partners - during each defined survey period
- Manage all project administration and facilitate Watford Water Quality forum – all year round

	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Riverfly Monitoring												→
Outfall Safari												
Water Chemical Analysis												→
Geomorphological Surveys												
Invasive Plant Surveys												
Dragonfly Surveys												
Fish Surveys												
Project Administration												→
Watford Water Quality Forum												→

**Table 39 - Annual timeline of activities for the Project Coordinator**

## 5.2 Annual cost

### 5.2.1 Cost of individual monitoring activities

The total annual cost of each environmental monitoring activity is summarised below in Table 40. Please note that not all surveys will be conducted annually (see section 5.1.4.).

	Staff time				Equipment and venue hire for training	Expenses	Total annual cost
	Project Coordinator	CVFC	CCP CIC	HMWT			
Riverfly Monitoring	£3,500	£1,650			£6,763	£2,260	<b>£14,173</b>
Outfall Safari	£3,250	£225	£750		£600	£90	<b>£4,915</b>
Water Chemical Analysis	£3,000		£3,000		£600	£1,860	<b>£8,460</b>
Geomorphological Surveys	£4,500				£1,600	£440	<b>£6,540</b>
Invasive Plant Surveys	£1,750		£2,750		£320	£145	<b>£4,965</b>
Dragonfly and Damselfly Surveys	£1,000			£3,750	£1,500	£275	<b>£6,525</b>
Fish Surveys							<b>£0</b>
Project Administration	£4,500				£0	£0	<b>£4,500</b>
Watford Water Quality Forum	£4,500					£0	<b>£4,500</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>£26,000</b>	<b>£1,875</b>	<b>£6,500</b>	<b>£3,750</b>	<b>£10,383</b>	<b>£5,070</b>	<b>£53,578</b>

**Table 40 - Total annual cost for each environmental monitoring activity outlined in this feasibility study**

### 5.2.2 Cost saving by funding the full programme

Each activity has been costed out in full and could be funded as individual projects. However, the overall cost would be reduced if the project was funded as a whole because equipment could be shared across projects through a central hub. For example, the cost of waders and personal protective equipment costs £5,000 in the budget outlined in 5.2.1. but could be halved to £2,500 if resources were shared. The Project Coordinator could track the project inventory and allocate resources to each project as required.

### 5.3 Total delivery costs 2020 – 2025

The total cost of all environmental activities for the first 5 years of the Rediscovering the River Colne project are outlined in Table 41.

Most environmental monitoring activities will be repeated each year of the 10-year Rediscovering the River Colne project:

- Riverfly surveys
- Water chemical analysis
- Invasive plant surveys
- Fish surveys
- Project administration
- Facilitation of Watford Water Quality Forum

Some activities will not commence until year 2 of the project:

- Geomorphological surveys will commence after practical river improvements (workstream 1) have been delivered in year 1
- Dragonfly and damselfly surveys will commence in year 2 once the survey methodology has been finalised

The Outfall Safari will be repeated every 4 years:

- This is the recommended survey frequency as it allows sufficient time for Thames Water to make operational changes in response to the Outfall Safari data

	2020/21	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24	2024/25
Riverfly Monitoring	£14,173	£14,173	£14,173	£14,173	£14,173
Outfall Safari	£4,915				£4,915
Water Chemical Analysis	£8,460	£8,460	£8,460	£8,460	£8,460
Geomorphological Surveys		£6,540	£6,540	£6,540	£6,540
Invasive Plant Surveys	£4,965	£4,965	£4,965	£4,965	£4,965
Dragonfly and Damselfly Surveys		£6,525	£6,525	£6,525	£6,525
Fish Surveys	£0	£0	£0	£0	£0
Project Administration	£4,500	£4,500	£4,500	£4,500	£4,500
Watford Water Quality Forum	£4,500	£4,500	£4,500	£4,500	£4,500
<b>Annual Total</b>	<b>£41,513</b>	<b>£49,663</b>	<b>£49,663</b>	<b>£49,663</b>	<b>£54,578</b>

**Table 41 - Total delivery costs for the Environmental Monitoring Project from 2020 - 2025**

# Community Engagement Project

## Rediscovering the River Colne

September 2020



Presented by  
The Colne Catchment Action Network





## Community Engagement Project

### *Rediscovering the River Colne*

September 2020

Groundwork East  
The Colne Catchment Action Network  
[east@groundwork.org.uk](mailto:east@groundwork.org.uk)

## The Colne Catchment Action Network

Affinity Water	Groundwork South
Bath Road Piscatorial Society	Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust
Blenheim Angling Society	Herts Countryside Management Project
British Airways	Herts County Council
British Airways Angling Society	Impress the Chess
Bucks County Council	Iver & District Countryside Association
Canal & Rivers Trust	Iver Parish Council
Chesham Town Council	Landscape Futures
Chiltern District Council	London Borough of Hillingdon
Chilterns Conservation Board	London Wildlife Trust
Chilterns Chalk Stream Project	Misbourne River Action
Chiltern Society	River Chess Association
Colnbrook with Poyle Parish Council	Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead
Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative	St Albans City & District Council
Colne Valley Park CIC	Slough Borough Council
Dacorum Borough Council	South Bucks District Council
Dacorum Environmental Forum Water Group	Spelthorne Borough Council
Eastcote Conservation Panel	Spelthorne Natural History Society
Egham & Staines Conservation Volunteers	Thames Water
Environment Agency	Three Rivers District Council
Friends of Colne Valley Park	Uxbridge Rovers Angling & Conservation Society
Friends of Gt Barn, Harmondsworth	Ver Valley Society
Friends of Pinn Meadows	Watford Borough Council
Friends of Stockers Lake	Wild Trout Trust
Greater London Authority	Wraysbury Parish Council
Groundwork East	Zoological Society of London

### Rediscovering the River Colne Workstream 4 Delivery Partners:

This community engagement project was produced by Groundwork East in partnership with all partners included on Appendix 1 and 2 of the report.



## **INTRODUCTION**

Watford Borough Council (WBC) states in the Rediscovering the River Colne Project brief that for the wider project to be successful the River Colne needs to be championed and valued by the Watford community. They state that the project must bring together the Watford community to celebrate, value and protect the River Colne and that stakeholders must feel involved and empowered so that they can make a worthwhile contribution to delivering the benefits of the scheme.

Stakeholder feedback received during this work agrees with this position stating that there is 'no point' trying to improve the river habitat if people are not caring for it and/or there is not enough water in it, therefore community engagement is essential throughout all elements of the Rediscovering the River Colne project. There are already many diverse projects and groups interacting with the River Colne and this forms a strong base which can be built on throughout the ten years of the project.

The aim therefore is that through the community engagement plan the river corridor will be brought into the heart of the community through a programme of volunteer days, events, information and tailored communications, enabling local people to become actively involved in and stewards of their environment.

## **ENGAGEMENT PLAN**

A detailed three-year plan has been produced identifying a wide range of linked activities, themes and messages, the potential lead, where possible an approximate cost and timescale with potential funding streams being displayed within the separate funding strategy.

The document will work as a guide to be assessed annually to reflect changing interest in and effectiveness of activities as well as changing local priorities and funding opportunities. The project delivery is dependent on available funding and this document should be used as a resource to encourage and engage. The engagement plan includes community engagement information from the Environmental Monitoring workstream and there will be further opportunities to be added as part of the annual updates once timescales of river improvement plan activity are finalised. The full engagement plan can be found at:

- Appendix 1 – filtered by current status of the activity and
- Appendix 2 – filtered by themes. These incorporate an exciting wide range of activities and partners.

## **COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT METHODOLOGY**

- A community and organisation focussed survey was created to ascertain the following - current river Colne uses, events and activities that are being run, people's views on additional events/activities, current issues preventing people using the Colne and whether people would be willing to volunteer in the future (a full list of questions and answers, including potential volunteers can be found as Appendix 3. This contains personal data where it has been agreed that this could be collated but this must not be widely circulated.
- 131 responses were received in total, including 13 organisations who wished to be further involved in the project and 32 people wishing to be involved with volunteering.

- A meeting was hosted including stakeholders and community groups attended by representatives from Groundwork, Watford Borough Council, Green Gym, Community Connections Projects CIC, Colne Valley Fisheries Consultative, Environment Agency, Affinity Water, Herts & Middlesex Wildlife Trust, Watford Community Housing, Courtlands Residents Association
- Further meetings, discussions and emails were held with relevant groups that attended the meeting and further interested parties including Herts County Council Countryside Rights of Way, Woodside Morris Men, Watford Mayor, local schools, WBC park officers, Watford Museum, Veolia, yoga groups, art groups and Friends of Oxhey Park.
- A business list was also created of businesses that are within 150m of the river Colne in Watford (Appendix 4) but these have not been approached as of yet
- A meeting took place with WBC on 18/12/19 to consider the initial results of the study and options for further development to the engagement plan and these were then incorporated.

## THEMES

To present potential engagement, themes were established to link activities and messages, each event and activity has been assigned to one of the following:

- **Arts and Heritage** – including history walks, exhibitions, art workshops and dance
- **Education** – including school programmes, workshops and public talks
- **Health and Wellbeing** – including health walks, Green Gym and fitness
- **Public Outreach** – including sustainability projects, competitions and festivals
- **Volunteering and Conservation** – including clean-ups, river monitoring and corporate team building days

## KEY ENGAGEMENT PLAN FINDINGS AND PROPOSED PRIORITIES FOR ACTION

The plan (Appendix 1 and 2) shows a wide range of current and potential activity from those that will continue as is, those where there is potential for expanding delivery and those which are proposed to start. These range from conservation and river clearance sessions, history and wildlife walks, yoga, Morris Men activity, school engagement, monitoring of the river, training opportunities.

It is recommended that a role of river outreach officer is required to further develop and encourage engagement and ensure opportunities are maximised. This half time role will deliver some activities but also liaise with existing and potential groups to support the running of their events and facilitate the wider community delivery of activity. The river outreach officer will also lead engagement with harder to reach groups to ensure the message is being brought to the widest possible audience. This role could be hosted by the local authority or a community partner and costs built into funding bids as required. In the interim it is recommended that a project partner begins this work. There is a recommendation in the environmental monitoring workstream for the role of a monitoring officer and it is advised that together these will form one full time position or two part time roles. It is recommended that the river outreach officer/environmental monitoring role should be in post for 3 years to support relevant groups including the establishment of a Friends Group after which it is expected that a programme of activity can be facilitated from within WBC PR and Parks Departments. The river outreach officer/environmental monitoring officer will link to/co-ordinate with all the volunteering opportunities throughout the whole programme incorporating all workstreams. They will develop plans for all practical conservation type

activities through liaising with partners and so that the plan engages with as wide a variety of groups to deliver the work.

It is proposed that the year 1 focus be: (amendments have been made in the light of Covid19).

- A programme of events will be identified, publicised and run during 2021 advertising all opportunities – developing links with project delivers, supporters and partners including: - Green Gym, WBC, CIC, CVFC, Friends of Oxhey Park, CRoW, Veolia, Herts Health Walks (HHW), Woodside Morris Men, ArtyAmber, Watford Museum, Yoga with Arjie, Thames Water, Affinity Water, HMWT, EA, residents associations and various housing associations.
- A Friends’ group for the entire Watford Colne will be established bringing input from connections built up from this initial stage of work. This will ensure current groups are working together on projects along the Watford Colne alongside providing a pool of specialisms and interests to be involved with separate workstreams. It will ensure that the project activity is guided by and developed with the local community. The aim is to be set up formally in first year so that it can also bid for separate project funds. This will take place from Dec 2020.
- A community river festival would be an ideal way to focus the implementation of the engagement plan and assist with further ‘Friends’ recruitment. This to take place in summer 2021 with adaptations made as required by relevant Covid19 government guidelines. Various Watford Colne competitions and promotions will run alongside this.
- Included within the river festival will be environmental monitoring activity invertebrate workshops run by partners facilitated by CVFC.
- A history of Watford Colne event will be run from Watford Museum in parallel to the community river festival.
- A historic Watford Colne walk will be developed from the end of 2020 to early 2021 – to be developed by Watford Museum alongside Groundwork East.
- School activity coordination will take place early 2021.
- Alongside the above a Watford wide sustainability and water saving and quality messaging programme needs to be run. Further work on this is required and built upon with further input from Affinity Water, Thames Water, Environment Agency and Groundwork.
- Businesses will be approached as part of a corporate membership scheme (Corporate Friend of the River Colne) alongside a more formal approach to larger businesses to discuss how they can be involved with future funding.

## YEAR ONE COSTS

Activity	Activity Lead	Cost
Events programme	Officer	Officer cost and £5,000 for funding partner delivery incl purchases
Friends group creation	Officer	Officer cost
River Festival	Officer/WBC – engaging all	Officer cost and £5,000 capital
History of Colne Exhibition	Watford Museum + Groundwork	£2,500
Invertebrate Workshop	Officer/CVFC	Officer cost/CVFC no cost

Historic Colne Walk	Watford Museum + Groundwork	£2,500
School activity coordination	Officer	Officer cost
Watford wide water/sustainability messaging	Officer, Affinity, Thames, EA	Officer cost and £5,000 for funding partner elements of delivery
Corporate Friends	Officer	Officer cost
Events Programme	Officer	Officer cost

Note: costs of practical volunteer activity within the river improvements and environmental monitoring are showing elsewhere within the project budget – see summary report.

All the above will be done through working closely with WBC PR and Marketing staff.

Over the first 3 years it is estimated that the officer will be involved in over 40 projects/events per year as per Appendix 1 and 2 (new activities will be added throughout the process), priorities for these projects will be established during regular meetings with WBC with additional projects added as. An annual cost of £47,500 has been identified to cover an externally hosted staff member with a £20,000 capital budget. Indicative use of the £20,000 capital spend is identified above for year 1 but will be amended depending on final choices of activity to progress, the scale chosen and also whether funds can be attracted from other funders. A key role of the Friends Group will be to secure funds to support and expand the delivery of activities going forward.

This engagement plan will remain a working document through the process of project delivery. It should be assessed annually by the established Friends Group alongside WBC to ensure activities are effective, meeting the need and to add new proposals. As the engagement plan will include volunteering opportunities within the river restoration works these will also need to be reviewed annually alongside the wider plan.

# Funding strategy

## Rediscovering the River Colne

September 2020



Presented by  
The Colne Catchment Action Network





**Funding strategy**  
*Rediscovering the River Colne*  
September 2020

Groundwork East  
The Colne Catchment Action Network  
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## FUNDING STRATEGY

### Introduction

Fundamentally the work planned across the Rediscovering the River Colne project is environmental in nature including both physical improvements and also community engagement, stewardship, care and use all of which are essential to the success and sustainability of the project. However, the diverse range of activities planned provides scope much beyond purely environmental benefit and as a result the project has a wider range of potential funding sources than might traditionally have been available to a “purely environmental” project. This could include funds focussed on: education and training, working with marginalised or vulnerable groups, health and wellbeing etc.

Creativity will be key. Opportunities will often come up with short timescales for action and it is important that the funding plan is dynamic, agile and flexible to meet needs and opportunities as they arise. This is particularly the case with the current changes in the funding environment due to the pandemic. Many funders have changed the focus of their support to assisting with Covid recovery or closed them during this time and the situation changes daily as new opportunities arise. For example, DEFRA has announced a large-scale Green Recovery Challenge Fund that will be launched the week of 14 September 2020 with a very short application timeframe.

The project should benefit greatly from the range of partners involved who bring the skills, knowledge and resources to make the most of a wide range of opportunities as well as officer time to enable the plan to be nimble and creative. Already this has secured the offer of £100k of funding as well as one partner, Affinity Water, already undertaking identified habitat improvement works on a piece of their land adjacent to the river.

### The plan

Typically, such a plan would identify fundraising targets for the first few years of a programme which in a project of this scale would be five years. These targets would be updated annually to reflect the work already completed and any changing priorities and focus amongst the partners and funders. It would also identify a split of funding sources and the estimated proportion coming from each potential source which would show, over time, a move from public sector to a greater proportion of charitable funding as the community engagement and ownership grows.

However, as referenced above, with the current Covid-19 pandemic the funding situation is constantly changing and so is difficult to predict and consequently a different approach is recommended identifying short term actions at this time. The longer-term plan however could be developed as originally intended once the situation becomes clearer at a later stage. The list of potential funders at Appendix 1 will support this at whatever point it is undertaken.

For the short-term, greater consideration must be given to aspects of the programme that will assist in recovery from the recession as we come out of the pandemic as well as the environmental elements. Myriad factors affect recovery from a recession and as things return to normal activities that champion and promote the outdoors will be highly sought after. The role of the outdoors in good mental health has long been known and following this period of reduced travel and isolation the facilities and activities offered through the project can have an important role. Such community engagement will ensure that the project capitalises on the environmental gains made by the physical elements of the project. From another angle the long-term unemployed will face new barriers to employment as more skilled people are made unemployed by the pandemic and the opportunity to provide experience and training through implementation of projects could provide an important local opportunity.

Overall, the varied elements of this project can be used to meet the varied, changing needs resulting from the epidemic. As such the Rediscovering the River Colne project can help develop and implement a green recovery strategy.

Short term activity is identified as the following.

- DEFRA/Environment Agency – the Green Recovery Challenge Fund is expected to be announced the week of 14 September 2020 with a very short application window and this project is likely to be a close fit to what is required – strong partnership, plans well developed etc. It will also be important to build on the existing links with EA to secure additional funding on top of the £50,000 agreed to date
- Water companies - as well as consideration of specific project bids for support, the companies should be approached at a senior level for wider support of the whole project for a number of years. Possibly via a presentation to be made by the Mayor alongside project partners we can demonstrate how the activity can help them meet their own business plan targets as well as be seen as a supporting corporate partner. Both water companies have already expressed their interest in the project with Affinity Water identifying £50,000 potential funding for 2021-22 financial year
- Watford Borough Council (WBC)
  - internal bids for support are planned for September 2020 and this support will be needed to release the support of other partners such as the Environment Agency and the water companies.
  - A review of any unspent/unallocated S106/CIL funds should take place and approaches made to Hertfordshire County Council and potentially adjoining local authorities to identify any opportunities.
  - Key for the success of the project is the need for the project to be high in the awareness of all departments of the Council but particularly the planning department at WBC to identify opportunities for S106/CIL and also biodiversity net gain within new developments. A presentation by the partners could be held to support this if required.
- Lottery – a meeting with Lottery is proposed to discuss how they feel the project best fits their new funding opportunities which have been amended again over recent months to support organisations through the pandemic. They will be administering the Green Recovery Fund.

### **Funders more generally**

Appendix 1 provides detail of the wide range of current national and local funders identified who could be targeted to help fund elements of the project. As stated earlier these will change in the short term but overall there are many potential sources of financial support to help in the delivery of the project.

WBC has been, and will remain, the lead for the project and an informed and knowledgeable funder over the lifetime of the *Rediscovering the River Colne* project. The basis of the local authority funding will also allow other funds to be attracted to the work and the project is likely to remain reliant on an element of local authority managed funding throughout, such as: parks, Section 106/Community Infrastructure Levy, Mayor's small grants, locality budgets etc. However, it is understood that local authority funding will not be available until 2021-22.

An initial phase of ambitious, large scale applications such as those to the water companies, Environment Agency, charitable trusts, foundations and the Lottery is anticipated and will continue to be important sources of income over the lifetime of the project. ColneCAN members already have strong relationships and knowledge of a number of these sources and

processes and are well placed to front or support a number of these. The water companies both have funds that can be bid to, with larger sums available from Thames Water, but individual approaches about the wider project as a whole, potentially over a period of time, should also be considered. Both Thames Water and Affinity Water have been approached about the project and are excited to be involved. Bids to the Lottery can be reviewed and prioritised once the focus of delivery has been decided but as the processes are long these should only be considered on a large scale.

Community involvement in many of these applications will be vital to their success and in future the community having a degree of fundraising responsibility is anticipated which could be delivered through a number of mechanisms such as a 'Friends of the River Colne' membership scheme or a local community-led sub-group of the Colne CAN. Members of such a group are likely to require training to ensure that they have the skills to undertake this activity but WBC and Colne CAN members are well placed to provide this. Such a role supports the proposal for a river officer to lead the project as referenced in the monitoring and engagement reports, potentially for at least the first three years. Funds for such a role could be part of this funding strategy.

As the project continues a shift from the larger application-based funding sources, including WBC, to more locally-based fundraising that engages with and is led by the community is anticipated. In part this is because the larger scale environmental and access improvement works are due to happen in the earlier stages of the project where in later years activities are increasingly focussed on monitoring, community engagement and maintenance.

Local income streams however will only be successful if the project gains recognition and awareness and engages local people willing to be involved in the longer-term as volunteers and/or donors. It is therefore vitally important that the project is well promoted via social media and more traditional mediums, that we use consistent branding and messaging (as has already started on the project website) and that we have a process in place, across all partners, on how those people interested can be appropriately engaged and supported. The development of a marketing plan and a volunteering procedure is strongly recommended to ensure a quality experience for all those engaging with the project. As referenced elsewhere in the report this local engagement is much more likely to be successful if a designated officer is in post to lead this work. The funding for such a role could be part of funding bids to a number of sources identified if required.

Generating interest from corporate supporters can be undertaken in a number of different ways and it is likely that a blend of these approaches will be used to establish initial engagement and this is referenced in the engagement project action plan. These include:

- Team-building / volunteering opportunities
- Community conscience / environmental responsibility (CSR approach)
- Helping address a business challenge or issue (eg pollution)
- Through the planning process – there now exists a requirement for biodiversity net gain within developments and if it is not possible for improvement to be provided within the development then the developer can fund the improvements to be made elsewhere. A non-technical summary of this project can provide the authority with a saleable 'product' to offer to developers when required.
- Again CIL/Section 106 opportunities apply to corporate links
- WBC already has strong links with a number of local corporates including Veolia who run contracts for the authority and are keen to support wider environmental initiatives

Initially business engagement will target those locally based organisations in the Watford Business Improvement District (BID) and those with premises adjacent to the river. A list of these companies is shown within the community engagement plan report.

### **Other opportunities**

As well as direct financial support to assist in delivery of the project as identified above a number of other avenues are available including volunteering – local and corporate, planning gain via local developments and working with partners who are already delivering or planning work or activity in the area. For example Affinity Water, Thames Water and Veolia are all active locally with communications to residents and corporates which the project can ‘piggy-back’ on where appropriate. The strength of the partnership delivery will again allow the opportunities to be maximised.

**Appendix 4A**

**Rediscovering the River Colne - potential funders list**

September 2020

The funding situation is currently very unclear due to the Covid pandemic with many funders having amended their priorities to Covid relief/recovery. The links are therefore currently the most useful element of this sheet allowing regular checks to be made to identify when priorities change to something that is useful for the project. This is particularly true with regard to private Trusts which need to be checked at regular intervals

Title	Description from the Funder	Geography	Priority activity 1-3	Value	Deadline	Link
<b>WATER FOCUSED</b>						
<b>DEFRA - Green Recovery Challenge Fund</b>	Information awaited - due week commencing 14 September 2020	National	1			<a href="https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-40-million-green-jobs-challenge-fund">https://www.gov.uk/government/news/government-announces-40-million-green-jobs-challenge-fund</a>
<b>Environment Agency - Area Water Resources Programme</b>	To support activity that addresses water framework directive 'reasons for failure' - ie water quality & quantity	Herts & North London	1	poss in excess of £50k per year	ongoing via discussions with EA	none
<b>Affinity Water</b>	Potential to link to their river restoration aspirations for larger sums towards the river improvements. Also recommend a larger corporate approach for the project as a whole and demonstrate how the project can support the company's 5 year plan. The company is currently reviewing their small scale Community Engagement Fund but is typically £2-3k.	their operating area	1	all values depending on the approach taken	none currently	<a href="https://www.affinitywater.co.uk/corporate/community/engagement-fund">https://www.affinitywater.co.uk/corporate/community/engagement-fund</a>
<b>Thames Water</b>	Has previously run a Community Investment Programme distributing £6.5m into community projects over 5 years. Information for 2021/22 should be known in the next few months but is expected to be multi-year again and linked to similar objectives around implementing education initiatives for schools and customers around water conservation and environmental protection; to support community projects that deliver environmental and wildlife improvements. Again, we recommend a larger corporate approach for the project as a whole identifying how it can help the company meet its business plan targets	their operating area	1	currently unknown	currently unknown	<a href="https://www.thameswater.co.uk/about-us/responsibility/investing-in-our-communities">https://www.thameswater.co.uk/about-us/responsibility/investing-in-our-communities</a>
<b>LOCAL AUTHORITIES</b>						
<b>Watford Borough Council</b>	Section 106 & Community Infrastructure Levy - check for any held funds and raise awareness of project for consideration by the planning authority against new applications	Watford	1	currently unknown	Ongoing	None
<b>Hertfordshire County Council</b>	Section 106 & Community Infrastructure Levy - as above		1			None
	Rights of Way budget - during consultation HCC identified that there may be funds available	Hertfordshire	1	Not stated	Ongoing	None
	Herts Adult & Family Learning Service - annual opportunity to tender for funds which could support engagement activity - could include conservation tasks, environmental monitoring, walks	Hertfordshire	2	Various	Anticipated next opportunity April 2021	<a href="https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/adult-learning/about-hafls/about-hafls.aspx">https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/microsites/adult-learning/about-hafls/about-hafls.aspx</a>
	Members Locality Budget - each councillor gets £10,000 a year to spend on local projects that promote the social, economic or environmental wellbeing of their local area. Grants can be given for anything, as long as it's legal and doesn't go against a county council policy. If your organisation or community group would like to ask for a grant, you must get in touch with your local councillor and get their agreement before you apply.	Hertfordshire	2	Not stated	Ongoing	<a href="https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/how-the-council-works/locality-budgets/member-locality-budget.aspx">https://www.hertfordshire.gov.uk/about-the-council/how-the-council-works/locality-budgets/member-locality-budget.aspx</a>
<b>LOTTERY</b>						
<b>National Lottery Grants for Heritage</b>	The National Lottery Grant for Heritage is an open programme for all types of heritage projects in the UK, including local, regional and national heritage. Heritage can mean different things to different people. It can be anything from the past that is valued with the wish to pass it on to future generations. Three levels of funding: •Grants of between £3,000 and £10,000 for projects of up to one year. Suitable for not-for-profit organisations and private owners of heritage. •Grants of between £10,000 and £250,000. (Grants of between £10,000 and £100,000 are suitable for not-for-profit organisations and private owners of heritage and partnership. Grants of between £100,000 and £250,000 are suitable for not-for-profit organisations and partnerships led by not-for-profit organisations). •Grants of between £250,000 and £5 million for projects with development phase of up to two years and delivery phase of up to five years. Suitable for not-for-profit organisations and partnerships led by not-for-profit organisations.	National	2	£3,000 - £5m. Match funding: none for bids under £100k, 5% of costs if between £100k & 1 million, 10% if £1 million or more	Applications can be made at any time for grants of between: •£3,000 and £10,000. Decision within eight weeks. •£10,000 and £100,000. Decisions within eight weeks.  Applications for grants exceeding £100,000 are assessed within 12 weeks and following assessment will be assigned to a quarterly committee meeting.	<a href="https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding">https://www.heritagefund.org.uk/funding</a>
<b>The National Lottery Community Fund - Reaching Communities</b>	Currently focussing on funding projects and organisations helping communities through Covid-19. Reaching Communities typically make grants of over £10,000 in England, supporting organisations with great ideas that enable communities to thrive. The grants are awarded to voluntary and community organisations or social enterprises for up to five years. They can fund project activities, operating costs, organisational development and capital costs. They support ideas that meet one or more of our three funding priorities of: bring people together and build strong relationships in and across communities improve the places and spaces that matter to communities enable more people to fulfil their potential by working to address issues at the earliest possible stage.	National - England	2	Over £10,000	Ongoing	<a href="https://www.nlccommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/reaching-communities-england">https://www.nlccommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/reaching-communities-england</a>

<b>The National Lottery Community Fund - Awards for All</b>	Currently focussing on funding projects and organistaions helping communitiies through Covid-19. National Lottery Awards for All typically offers funding from £300 to £10,000 to support what matters to people and communities. For voluntary or community organisation, registered charity, constituted group or club, not-for-profit company or community interest company, social enterprise, school, statutory body (including town, parish and community council). You must meet at least one of our National Lottery Awards for All three funding priorities: bringing people together and building strong relationships in and across communities improving the places and spaces that matter to communities enabling more people to fulfil their potential by working to address issues at the earliest possible stage.	National - England	3	Between £300 - £10,000	Ongoing	<a href="https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/national-lottery-awards-for-all-england">https://www.tnlcommunityfund.org.uk/funding/programmes/national-lottery-awards-for-all-england</a>
<b>PRIVATE</b>						
<b>Arts Council England</b>	The Arts Council England invest in art and culture for a lasting return. They are looking for organisations, artists, events, initiatives and others to apply for funding to help them achieve their mission of great art and culture for everyone.	National	2	Scheme for under £15,000 and one for over £15,000	Ongoing	<a href="https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/projectgrants">https://www.artscouncil.org.uk/projectgrants</a>
<b>AVIVA Community Fund</b>	Groups can apply for funding for projects that make a positive impact on their communities, there are four categories under which to apply including community support; awards range from £1,000 to £25,000.	National	2	£1,000 - £25,000	Published on website - you can register for email alert	<a href="https://community-fund.aviva.co.uk/voting/campaign/getinvolved">https://community-fund.aviva.co.uk/voting/campaign/getinvolved</a>
<b>British Ecological Society Outreach Grants</b>	Schools, museums, libraries and community groups will be able to apply for grants to promote ecological science to a wide audience. Applications from schools must involve significant outreach beyond schools. The maximum award is £2,000 and the grant may be used as part-funding for larger projects involving other sponsors.	National	3	£2,000	next deadline 2 Sept 20	<a href="https://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/funding/outreach-grants/">https://www.britishecologicalsociety.org/funding/outreach-grants/</a>
<b>Frugi's Happy Childhood Fund</b>	We are looking for small grass roots charities in UK communities that are supporting kids living in poverty. We'd really love to help as many charity projects as possible, focussing on our three pillars: Hunger, Shelter and Nature.	National	3	not given	Doesn't say - monitor	<a href="https://www.welovefrugi.com/customers/frugi/making_a_difference">https://www.welovefrugi.com/customers/frugi/making_a_difference</a>
<b>Morrisons Foundation</b>	The Morrisons Foundation supports charities making a positive difference in local communities across England, Scotland and Wales. We award grants for charity projects and match fund the money that Morrisons colleagues raise for their chosen charities. Our grant funding supports charities delivering projects which help to improve people's lives.	National	3	up to £25,000	Ongoing	<a href="https://www.morrisonsfoundation.com/">https://www.morrisonsfoundation.com/</a>
<b>One Stop Carriers for Causes</b>	Carriers for Causes is a local grants scheme available to any community, charity or not for profit group within 2 miles of a One Stop store. Grants of up to £1,000 are allocated on a quarterly basis following application process. One Stop has partnered with the charity Groundwork to deliver this scheme	National (within 2 miles of a One Stop Store)	2	£1,000	Quarterly	<a href="https://www.groundwork.org.uk/Pages/Category/carriers-for-causes-uk">https://www.groundwork.org.uk/Pages/Category/carriers-for-causes-uk</a>
<b>People's Health Trust</b>	Provide grants of between £5,000 and £50,000 for community groups and not-for-profit organisations through the Active Communities funding programme. They fund small and local projects, designed and run by local people to help them make their communities even better places to live.	National	3	£5 - £50,000	Check website for geographic areas currently accepting applications	<a href="https://www.peopleshealthtrust.org.uk/apply-for-funding">https://www.peopleshealthtrust.org.uk/apply-for-funding</a>
<b>People's Postcode Lottery - Postcode Community Trust</b>	The Postcode Community Trust will support initiatives that work to improve health and wellbeing through schemes such as arts and physical recreation projects or those focusing on reducing isolation.	National	3	£500 - £20,000 for charities (up to £2,000 for other organisations)	Two funding rounds a year	<a href="http://www.postcodecommunitytrust.org.uk/">http://www.postcodecommunitytrust.org.uk/</a>
<b>People's Postcode Lottery - the Postcode Local Trust</b>	Grants from the Postcode Local Trust will go towards flood-prevention measures and renewable energy strategies, as well as improving outdoor spaces with, for example, skate or play parks.'	National	3	£500 - £20,000 for charities (up to £2,000 for other organisations)	Two funding rounds a year	<a href="http://www.postcodelocaltrust.org.uk/">http://www.postcodelocaltrust.org.uk/</a>
<b>Sport England</b>	Sport England have a wide range of grants available for projects that help people to become more active to large scale re-development of sports facilities.	National	3	£1,000 up to large scale donations	Ongoing	<a href="https://www.sportengland.org/funding/">https://www.sportengland.org/funding/</a>
<b>Swire Charitable Trust</b>	Grants are available for UK registered charities working to deliver positive and lasting change to UK society under three programme areas: opportunity, environment and heritage.	National	3	There is no maximim or minimum	Throughout the year	<a href="https://www.swirecharitabletrust.org.uk/our-funding/">https://www.swirecharitabletrust.org.uk/our-funding/</a>
<b>Tesco Bags of Help</b>	Bags of Help is Tesco's local community grant scheme where the money raised from the 5p bag levy in Tesco stores is being used to fund thousands of community projects across the UK. The projects must meet the criteria of promoting community participation in the development and use of outdoor spaces. Grants to 3 projects per store per round of £2,000, £1,000 and £500	National	2	£500 - £2,000	Rolling programme	<a href="https://www.groundwork.org.uk/Sites/tescocommunityscheme/pages/Categories/boh-grant-for-project-tes">https://www.groundwork.org.uk/Sites/tescocommunityscheme/pages/Categories/boh-grant-for-project-tes</a>

<b>The Andy Fanshawe Memorial Trust</b>	The AFMT awards grants to disadvantaged young people to develop an existing interest and experience in adventurous outdoor activities. This includes walking, climbing, cycling, kayaking, sailing, horse riding - either self-planned or for residential courses at an outdoor centre.	National	3	£400	Ongoing	<a href="https://www.andyfanshawe.org/information-for-applicants.php">https://www.andyfanshawe.org/information-for-applicants.php</a>
<b>The Asda Foundation</b>	Currently focussing on helping schools and community groups through Covid. As a charitable and corporate Foundation, we focus on supporting small, local activities that directly involve our customers. Our mission is to transform communities and improve lives within the UK.	National	3	Not stated	Ongoing	<a href="https://www.asdafoundation.org/">https://www.asdafoundation.org/</a>
<b>The Conservation Foundation</b>	Creates and manages a variety of environmental award schemes. Check out their website to see those awards currently available.	National	3	Not stated	Not stated	<a href="http://www.conservationfoundation.co.uk">http://www.conservationfoundation.co.uk</a>
<b>The Ernest Cook Trust</b>	One of the leading outdoor learning charities. Has a number of small grant offers with a key one being a £15,000 grant towards salary only of an Outdoor Learning Officer to encourage, engage, educate, enable, extend participation, embed understanding. This is currently closed	National	3	Various - £15,000 towards an officer; up to £10,000 towards apprenticeships/scholarships; £500 small grants	Will reopen in spring 2020	<a href="http://ernestcooktrust.org.uk/outdoor-learning-officer/">http://ernestcooktrust.org.uk/outdoor-learning-officer/</a>
<b>The Esmee Fairbairn Foundation Connecting people with nature and environment issues</b>	The Foundation believe that people are the key to tackling the environmental challenges we face today. They fund organisations who can move, engage and inform people, and connect with the bigger picture of policy-making, social justice, or quality of life. They support work that: Excites and inspires people to get involved in nature or environmental issues and take action to make a difference, or Makes environmental issues relevant to people's everyday lives and what they care about, or Enables groups that may be disconnected from nature, for example in urban areas, to become more engaged. Hugely competitive and needs a very strong proposal	National	3	Under £20,000 to over £1m	Ongoing	<a href="https://esmeefairbairn.org.uk/environment">https://esmeefairbairn.org.uk/environment</a>
<b>The John Coates Charitable Trust</b>	The trust was established in 1969 and mainly makes grants to large national charities or to small charities that are of personal or local interest to the trustees. Grants are made for general charitable purposes, with some preference for the following: Education	South East England; South West England; London; East Anglia.	3	£1-£15,000	Ongoing	<a href="https://johncoatescharitabletrust.org.uk/">https://johncoatescharitabletrust.org.uk/</a>
<b>The Patagonia Fund</b>	Through their international grants programs, Patagonia fund environmental work that takes place within the following countries: Canada, Chile, Argentina, Japan, Korea, Australia, United Kingdom, Ireland, Norway, Sweden, Denmark, The Netherlands, Belgium, Luxembourg, Germany, France, Spain, Italy, Switzerland, Austria and the Czech Republic. As with all Patagonia grants programs, the International Grants Programs	International	2	\$8,000 and \$12,000	Two deadlines a year (April and August)	<a href="https://www.patagonia.com/environmental-grants.html">https://www.patagonia.com/environmental-grants.html</a>
<b>The Rowan Bentall Charitable Trust</b>	The trust was founded by Trust Deed in 1972 and registered with the Charity Commission in 1977. The trust supports general charitable purposes, with a particular interest in: researching and supplying medicine and good health; churches; those with special needs; advancing and promoting education; environmental protection and sustainability; national disasters; and animal welfare.	South East England East of England South West England	3	Not stated	Ongoing	Funds Online results
<b>The Trusthouse Charitable Foundation</b>	The Trusthouse Charitable Foundation are a medium-sized grant making foundation giving grants to small, well-established organisations in the UK who address local issues in areas of extreme urban deprivation, or in remote and fragile rural communities.	National	3	Up to £7,500 small grant, major grant up to £20,000	Applications reviewed 4 times a year	<a href="http://trusthousecharitablefoundation.org.uk/">http://trusthousecharitablefoundation.org.uk/</a>
<b>Waitrose Community Matters</b>	Waitrose's Community Matters initiative supports a wide range of charities and community groups. Each branch of Waitrose has £1,000 to share out between three local good causes each month. The scheme will consider supporting welfare organisations, community groups, schools or local divisions of national charities.	National	3	£333	Ongoing	<a href="https://www.waitrose.com/content/waitrose/en/home/inspiration/community-matters.html">https://www.waitrose.com/content/waitrose/en/home/inspiration/community-matters.html</a>
<b>HERTFORDSHIRE SPECIFIC FUNDERS to be reviewed at a later date</b>						
<b>A J H Ashby Will Trust</b>	The trust was established in 1990 to support wildlife throughout the UK, particularly birds, as well as supporting heritage, education projects and young people specifically in the Lea Valley area of Hertfordshire.	UK, especially Lea Valley area of Hertfordshire.		Not stated	Ongoing	Funds Online results
<b>The Mrs Smith and Mount Trust</b>	The Mount Fund has the following priority areas, details of which have been taken from the trust's website: Mental Health – For registered charities with income of up to £1M and unrestricted free reserves of less than six months' annual expenditure. Smaller charities with income of up to £500,000, particularly those working in rural communities, could be considered for larger grants of up to £20,000 paid over 2 or more years under this category. Homelessness – For registered charities with income of up to £1M and unrestricted free reserves of less	Norfolk; Suffolk; Cambridgeshire; Hertfordshire; Essex; Kent; Surrey; London.		Up to £20,000 (over two years)	Trustees meet 3 times a year	<a href="http://mrssmithandmounttrust.org/">http://mrssmithandmounttrust.org/</a>

<b>The John Apthorp Charity</b>	This is the charity of John Apthorp CBE, who founded the frozen food chain Bejam, which he later sold to Iceland, and co-founded Wizard Wine, which became Majestic Wine. Established in 2003, the objects of the charity are 'the advancement of education, the advancement of religion and the relief of poverty and suffering'. In 2010 the charity received a donation to the value of £4.3 million from the Milly Apthorp Charitable Trust (John's mother) which greatly increased the grant-making capacity of this charity. In 2012 the charity also received new assets of £29,000 upon the closure of John Apthorp Charitable Trust (Charity Commission no. 289713).	Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire and Buckinghamshire.		Not stated	Trustees meet 3 times a year	<a href="https://www.johnapthorpcharity.org/">https://www.johnapthorpcharity.org/</a>
<b>The Robert Clutterbuck Charitable Trust</b>	Robert Clutterbuck donated £1 million at the time of the trust's inception in 1992; he died in April 2012 leaving a further £500,000 to the trust in his will. According to the trust's website, 'the trustees prefer to make grants towards specific items and projects' to assist: personnel within the armed forces and ex-servicemen and women sport and recreational facilities for young people benefiting Cheshire and Hertfordshire the welfare, protection and preservation of domestic animal life benefiting Cheshire and Hertfordshire natural history and wildlife	UK, with a preference for Cheshire and Hertfordshire.		Not less than £1,000	The Trustees generally meet twice in each year to approve grants. The deadlines for the rounds of applications are 30th June and 31st December in each year.	<a href="http://www.clutterbucktrust.org.uk">http://www.clutterbucktrust.org.uk</a>
<b>Hertfordshire Community Foundation</b>	This is one of the 46 UK community foundations, which distribute funding for a wide range of purposes. As with all community foundations, there are a number of donor advised funds managed on behalf of individuals, families and charitable trusts. Grant schemes tend to change frequently, therefore please consult the foundation's website for details of current programmes and their up-to-date deadlines.	Hertfordshire		Various	Various	<a href="http://www.hertscf.org.uk">http://www.hertscf.org.uk</a>
<b>The David Laing Foundation</b>	The foundation was registered with the Charity Commission in 1979 to provide funding for general charitable purposes. The trust has particular favour for projects in the areas of youth; disability; and the arts, and it operates in Hertfordshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, and Oxfordshire. The 2017/18 annual report states that the foundation intends to continue providing support to the Community Foundations in Northamptonshire and Hertfordshire to reach the needs of local communities.	Hertfordshire, Oxfordshire, Leicestershire, Northamptonshire.		Not stated	Ongoing	<a href="#">Funds Online results</a>
<b>The Simon Gibson Charitable Trust</b>	The Simon Gibson Charitable Trust was set up by a settlement in 1975 by George Simon Cecil Gibson of Exning, near Newmarket, Suffolk. The trust's website states that it funds the following: Registered charities as well as educational and religious organisations CICs Local charities operating in Suffolk; Norfolk; Cambridgeshire; Glamorgan; Gwent; Monmouth; Powys; Carmarthen; Hertfordshire National charities, with a focus on the areas above Conservation charities	Suffolk; Norfolk; Cambridgeshire; Hertfordshire; Glamorganshire; Gwent; Powys; Carmarthenshire.		Usually £3,000 - £5,000	Application forms are available to download from the website and should be returned to the trust by post. Only postal applications submitted between 1st January and 31st March are considered. The trustees meet to consider applications in spring each year.	<a href="https://www.sgctrust.org.uk/">https://www.sgctrust.org.uk/</a>
<b>The Shanley Foundation</b>	The Shanly Foundation was established in 1997 for general charitable purposes. The foundation receives its income from the profits of Shanly Homes Limited and Sorbon Homes Limited, and functions as the charitable arm of the Shanly Group of companies established by the foundation's founder Michael Shanly. Since its creation the foundation has to-date donated over £13m to thousands of local community groups and charities. The foundation aims to support causes that 'help individuals and benefit the local community, including support for young people from disadvantaged backgrounds, the homeless, those with mental health issues and people with physical disabilities, injury or life limiting illness'	Worldwide with a preference for Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, Hampshire, Hertfordshire, North London, Oxfordshire, Surrey and West		Not stated	Ongoing	<a href="http://www.shanlyfoundation.com/">http://www.shanlyfoundation.com/</a>
<b>The Frank Litchfield Charitable Trust</b>	The trust was registered with the Charity Commission in 1994 to provide support for general charitable purposes, with particular interest in health and medicine; disability; and preventing and relieving poverty. The primary area of benefit is the counties of Cambridgeshire, Essex and Hertfordshire. After initially trialling the idea with the Cambridgeshire Community Foundation, the trust now distributes around half of their income in any year to the Community Foundations in each of the beneficial counties. The other half is awarded to charitable organisations, with grants ranging from £250 to £6,000.	Cambridgeshire, Essex and Hertfordshire.		Not stated	Not stated	<a href="#">Funds Online results</a>
<b>The Martin Laing Foundation</b>	This foundation was established in 1979 by Sir Martin Laing, a grandson of Sir John Laing. It is one of the Laing Family Trusts, a group which seek to promote the Christian religion and alleviate poverty in the UK and overseas. The foundation funds organisations and charities whose objectives are environmental and conversation based, or promoting small community projects to benefit disadvantaged young people or older people. There is a preference for small charities in Norfolk, Essex and Hertfordshire. A small number of grants are also made to overseas projects in Malta and Thailand.	Malta, Norfolk, Essex, Hertfordshire.		Not stated	Trustees meet quarterly	<a href="http://www.laingfamilytrusts.org.uk/">http://www.laingfamilytrusts.org.uk/</a>

<b>Christopher Laing Foundation</b>	The foundation was established in 1979 by Christopher Laing, a member of the Laing family which is associated with the construction company John Laing plc. Christopher Laing remains on the foundation's board of trustees and is also a trustee of two other grant-making charities associated with members of the Laing family – John Laing Charitable Trust (Charity Commission no. 236852) and The Beatrice Laing Trust (Charity Commission no. 211884). The foundation has general charitable purposes and, therefore, supports a wide range of charities. The annual report for 2017/18 states: At the Trustees' meeting on 28 October 2015, they decided to increase the non-exclusive priorities of the trust to charitable organisations in Hertfordshire and Oxfordshire and to those organisations supporting disabled adults.	UK with a preference for Hertfordshire and Oxfordshire.		Not stated	Ongoing	<a href="#">Funds Online results</a>
<b>Longmores Charitable Foundation</b>	This foundation was registered with the Charity Commission in October 2017. The trustees are all partners of Longmores Solicitors which have offices in Harlow and Hertford. Grants are available for local charities and organisations, working in the Hertfordshire and Essex but especially those working where there are branches of the solicitors. According to the foundation's website, the following causes are supported: The prevention or relief of poverty and financial hardship in the beneficial area by providing grants, items and services to individuals in need and/or charities, or other organisations working to prevent or relieve poverty The prevention or relief of sickness or long-term medical conditions The advancement of young people through the provision of recreational and leisure activities and the provision of activities and support which develops their 'skills, capacities and capabilities to enable them to participate in society as mature and responsible individuals'.	Hertfordshire and Essex.		Not stated	Deadlines for applications are 31 March and 30 September each year, and the trustees aim to make a decision within three months.	<a href="http://www.longmores-solicitors.co.uk/site/about/charitablefoundation/">http://www.longmores-solicitors.co.uk/site/about/charitablefoundation/</a>
<b>The A and R Woolf Charitable Trust</b>	The trust supports a range of causes, particularly children's welfare; animal welfare and conservation; health and medical research. Both UK and overseas charities (through a British-based office) receive support, together with local charities. Most of the grants are recurrent.	Worldwide; UK, mainly in Hertfordshire.		Not stated	Ongoing	<a href="#">Funds Online results</a>
<b>Robert Kiln Charitable Trust</b>	The trust was formed in 1970 by the late Robert Kiln, a Lloyd's underwriter, and supports a wide range of causes favouring archaeology, history and environmental conservation. The trust will support new projects, particularly those from small local organisations and charities where they have a particular interest. The trustees will favour causes where long-term relationships can be developed. Grants are usually one-off or made in instalments for particular projects and range from £25 to £2,500 (generally about £500).	UK, with a special interest in Hertfordshire and Bedfordshire; occasionally overseas.		Up to £2,500	Ongoing	<a href="#">Funds Online results</a>

Your reference number is ECPR362426450.

Thank you for submitting Exemption from Contract Procedure Rules - Request Approved

**First name:** Paul

**Last name:** Stacey

**Email address:** paul.stacey@watford.gov.uk

**Job title:**

**Section / Department:**

**Exemption category:** Limited market

**Details / Circumstances / Explanation of why an exemption was required:** Groundwork have hosted ColneCAN working towards improving the River Colne for a number of years, delivering projects for different administrative areas so have an established network of partners and comprehensive understanding of the river across its entire catchment area. They have also managed the programme development phase for the Council. As a supplier they are unique in having the range of skills and resources for this programme, notably technical knowledge, an established network of supporting stakeholders engaged in improving the river, an established pool of resources with the required specialist knowledge, community engagement and fundraising capacity. As a third sector organisation they are able to access external funding that the Council would not normally be able to apply for.

More specifically:

- They have a landscape architecture team to design and manage physical improvements and are a Landscape Institute Registered Practice. They can develop and run contracts but are also used to consulting and engaging the community, putting across complex issues in a clear, simple way. They can manage large and small contracts, run projects that have elements of both contractor and volunteer delivery and are used to varied projects that can involve specialties such as supervising art elements with or without engagement.
- Their community team includes qualified youth workers and teachers; generalist community support; experienced staff to run a range of activities from family play attracting young families to use their outdoors, tasks to promote health and wellbeing or to engage local companies in Corporate Social Responsibility and programmes of messaging about important issues – in this instance water saving & pollution.
- Their training teams can deliver physical improvements through short term programmes which typically work with those at furthest distance from the labour market linking them to entry level jobs.
- They have a marketing team to support all areas of our work ensuring awareness, benefits and engagement are maximised.
- They are local, have good local links, a long track record and good reputation.
- They are also ISO 9001 quality and BS 8555 environmentally accredited.

They are also a charitable trust committed to delivering environmental improvements through working with communities which is at the heart of this proposal.

Consultation with East Hertfordshire Council confirmed that when similar procurement exercises were carried out Groundwork were the only bidders interested in the work.

Groundwork South will focus on the in river and habitat improvements which in turn will be supported by the activities of Groundwork East.

The contract was let on 13th May 2021

The appended project proposal, and clarification email sets out further details

**Attach copy of email(s) if appropriate:** Rediscovering the River Colne - Gwk fee proposal, implementation stage 14.1.21.pdf, Gwk East amended River Colne Fee Proposal 23.3.21.pdf, FW Rediscovering the River Colne - updated fee proposal.msg

**Contract Title:** Rediscovering the River Colne

**Vendor / Contractor:** Groundwork East

**Date Contract let:** 12/09/2021

**Term / Duration of Contract:** 12 months

**End date:** 31/05/2022

**Total Value of Contract:** £158440

**WBC Contract Manager name:** Paul Stacey/Hayley Page

**WBC Contract Manager email:** paul.stacey@watford.gov.uk

**Comments / Other Information:** The piece of work will lead to delivery of 4 work streams to improve the River Colne in Watford

**Date:** 13/09/2021

**Group Head of Service approving / rejecting::** Alan Gough

**Decision:** Approve and forward to the Managing Director

**Comments (optional):**

**Date:** 13/09/2021

**Decision:** Approve the request

**Comments (optional):** I understand that this has been reviewed by the Monitoring Officer and Legal Services, and there are no issues with the approach outlined. Approved on this basis.

**Managing Director:** Donna Nolan

**Date:** 13/09/2021

**Name of the Portfolio Holder informed:** Councillor Ian Stotesbury

**Date the Portfolio Holder was informed:** 16/09/2021

**Date reported to Cabinet (If over £100K):** 04/10/2021

PART A

**Report to:** Licensing Committee & Cabinet  
**Date of meeting:** 30 September 2021 & 4 October 2021  
**Report of:** Business Compliance Officer  
**Title:** Community Protection Compliance Policy 2021-2026

**1.0 Summary**

- 1.1 Community Protection is responsible for ensuring compliance with legislation relating to areas such as anti-social behaviour, environmental protection, housing, food safety, licensing and health and safety at work. The council approves, and from time to time reviews policies on how the section should approach compliance and how legislation should be enforced in a proportionate and consistent manner.
- 1.2 This report sets out the framework of the review of the policy and includes a revised Compliance Policy for members’ consideration.
- 1.3 As this Policy encompasses both functions that are the responsibility of both Licensing Committee and Cabinet it needs to be approved by both bodies.

**2.0 Risks**

2.1	<b>Nature of Risk</b>	<b>Consequence</b>	<b>Suggested Control Measures</b>	<b>Response (Treat, tolerate, terminate, transfer)</b>	<b>Risk Rating (the combination of severity and likelihood)</b>
	Not implementing all suggested amendments to policy beyond	Existing policy contains outdated information. Risk that any future compliance action can be challenged	Adoption of new policy.	Treat	12

September 2021.	and may be difficult to justify or explain. Confusion among residents, visitors and businesses as to what is expected in terms of compliance in Watford.			
Retaining existing policy without any changes.	Existing policy contains outdated information. Risk that any future compliance action can be challenged and may be difficult to justify or explain. Confusion among residents, visitors and businesses as to what is expected in terms of compliance in Watford.	Adoption of new policy.	Treat	12
New Policy, when applied, leads to unfair or unreasonable enforcement	Negative perception of council and regulatory functions, and challenge through the courts.	Ensure Policy is applied correctly	Treat	2

### 3.0 Recommendations

- 3.1 That the Community Protection Compliance Policy 2021-2026, set out at appendix 1, be approved by the Licensing Committee in relation to functions under its remit.
- 3.2 That the Community Protection Compliance Policy 2021-2026, set out in appendix 1 be approved by Cabinet in relation to functions under its remit.

- 3.3 That the Head of Community Protection, in consultation with the Head of Legal, be authorised to make minor amendments to the Policy without member approval. These changes are to be restricted to updates of legislation, codes of practice and guidance notes, and are not to include any changes to approach or considerations.

For further information on this report please contact:

Jamie Mackenzie, Business Compliance Officer

Telephone extension: 8520

email: [jamie.mackenzie@watford.gov.uk](mailto:jamie.mackenzie@watford.gov.uk)

**Report approved by:** Justine Hoy, Head of Community Protection

#### **4.0 Background**

- 4.1 The council is the primary enforcement body for a range of legislation some of which falls within the remit of Licensing Committee and some which falls within the remit of Cabinet The types of legislation enforced are:

- anti-social behaviour
- environmental protection and pollution
- statutory nuisances such as noise, vibration and light
- infectious diseases
- filthy and verminous premises
- littering, fly-tipping and other environmental crimes
- health and safety at work
- gambling
- alcohol, entertainment and late-night refreshment
- taxis and private hire vehicles
- street trading
- houses in multiple occupation
- charity collections
- food hygiene
- housing standards
- dog fouling and dangerous dogs
- drainage
- animal welfare
- pest control
- abandoned vehicles
- smoke-free legislation.

- 4.2 When exercising those functions the council has the option to use a wide variety of powers including, but not limited to:
- Inspections
  - Closures of commercial and private premises
  - Issuing legally binding notices
  - Interviewing people under caution
  - Issuing fixed penalty notices
  - Issuing Community Protection Warnings and Notices
  - Imposing other financial penalties
  - Withdrawing, amending or refusing permissions
  - Issuing formal cautions
  - Taking civil legal action or instituting criminal proceedings (prosecutions).
- 4.3 This council, and many other councils, delegate these powers to council officers with the exception of review powers under the Licensing and Gambling Acts. The Compliance Policy sets out the expectations of how the various powers are to be exercised by officers on the council's behalf.
- 4.4 When undertaking work to ensure compliance with regulations or legislation the council has responsibilities under the Regulators' Code ("the Code") to ensure that any efforts are risk based and proportionate. This responsibility includes having regard to the Code when determining any general policy or principles about the exercise of specified regulatory functions. Paragraph 6.2(d) of the Code says regulators should publish a policy showing their approach to compliance.
- 4.5 Publication of the Code and Policy makes it clear to everyone involved the operational parameters within which legal powers ought to be exercised. It acts as a safeguard against abuse or over-zealous use of those powers. In addition, Regulators across Hertfordshire have signed up to a voluntary charter, the Better Business for All Charter, which sets out what businesses can expect in relation to compliance services.
- 5.0 Existing Enforcement Policy, New Compliance Policy and Rationale for Change**
- 5.1 The first Environmental Health and Licensing Enforcement Policy was created in 2011. The existing Environmental Health and Licensing Compliance Policy was adopted on 19 September 2016.

- 5.2 Whilst the majority of the current policy is retained in terms of the approach that officers are required to take when dealing with compliance issues, there are a number of changes to the existing policy which are proposed in the new policy and these are outlined in section 6.1. The proposed new policy is attached as Appendix 1.
- 5.3 It should be noted that the council always retains the right to depart from the policy should circumstances require it. Such circumstances may be when the offence is so serious, for example loss of life, or the offender is likely to flee or any other time if justifiable, reasonable and proportionate.
- 5.4 The aim of this policy remains to ensure that the council can show a robust and clear procedure that allows good businesses to grow, does not unnecessarily or disproportionately penalise any person who breaches regulations, and allows officers to take a risk based approach to ensuring compliance. Such a policy safeguards the council as well as those whom the council regulates.

## **6.0 Key changes to the existing policy**

- 6.1 The main changes to the existing policy are as follows:
- Updating information on the government departments responsible for regulatory issues. For example, in January 2018 the Office for Product Safety replaced Regulatory Delivery as part of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy.
  - Updating of corporate objectives.
  - Changes to legislation listed in the policy. There have been some legislative changes since the adoption of the previous policy in 2016.
  - The inclusion of further detail concerning the council's procedural safeguards that are in place when investigating and prosecuting offences.
  - Section 6.10 of the existing policy details the specific approach officers will take when dealing with licensing offences, notably, taxi or private hire licensing offences. Following application of the current approach, particularly in regard to driver licence suspensions, the policy has been redrafted to take account of new safeguarding requirements, comments from the court as a result of cases taken

under the existing policy, and in line with new guidelines issued by the Department for Transport in July 2020.

## **7.0 Public Consultation**

7.1 This policy was subject to public consultation between 12 July 2021 and 23 August 2021.

The consultation was sent to 197 email addresses connected to a range of organisations including:

- Local Faith Organisations
- Local and National Charities
- Residents Groups
- Council Departments
- Businesses

The consultation was subject to a press release and advertisement via social media.

Details of the consultation were sent by text to holders of taxi and private hire licences highlighting the specific section of the policy relevant to the trade.

Details of the consultation were sent to 1300+ businesses with the assistance of the Economic Development Team.

7.2 The council received one detailed response to the consultation. All changes suggested in the response were made except for one concerning the addition of case examples. These can be added following adoption of the policy as they do not change the policy in any way. The changes made to the policy as a result of the response are listed below:

- Addition of further detail concerning equality in section 1.8
- Addition of information on democratic oversight in section 2.2
- Further detail on scope of policy to clarify that it covers more than only 'individuals and businesses'.
- Clarification of section 4.1 to explain why some offences may carry a more serious initial penalty.
- Information on licence reviews.

- Clarifications on investigative and case review procedure in relation to hackney carriage and private hire licensing.
- Rectification of spelling error in section 6.10.8.

## **8.0 Implications**

### **8.1 Financial**

8.1.1 The Shared Head of Finance comments that any financial implications will be met from existing budgets

### **8.2 Legal Issues (Monitoring Officer)**

8.2.1 The Group Head of Democracy and Governance comments that the legal implications are contained within the body of the report and the proposed policy. As the Policy covers both executive and non executive functions it must be approved by Licensing Committee as well as Cabinet.

### **8.3 Equality Impact Assessment**

8.3.1 An impact assessment on the proposed consultation has been undertaken and can be found at appendix 2. The main findings of the EIA are:

On balance the Policy will bring about a positive benefit to Watford by ensuring fair and consistent regulation, improving the opportunity for all to run a business, to visit the town and to live in a community where there is a clearly defined route to reasonable and proportionate enforcement of laws and regulations.

#### **8.3.2 Human Rights**

Article 1 of The First Protocol of the Human Rights Act 1998 provides that every person is entitled to the peaceful enjoyment of their possessions and that no one shall be deprived of their possessions except in the public interest and subject to the conditions provided for by law and by the general principles of international law. Any regulatory actions are always taken in accordance with the Human Rights Act 1998.

#### **8.3.3 Data Protection Impact Assessment**

Having had regard to the council's obligations under the UK General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR) 2018, it is considered that officers are not required to undertake a Data Processing Impact Assessment (DPIA) for this report.

#### 8.4 **Staffing**

8.4.1 The strategy will not require additional staffing to achieve the stated aims.

#### 8.5 **Accommodation**

8.5.1 None

#### 8.6 **Community Safety/Crime and Disorder**

8.6.1 The Policy is concerned with community protection and the functioning of the regulatory services in Watford. The Policy will have a positive impact on increasing community safety, and decreasing incidents of crime and disorder.

#### 8.7 **Sustainability**

8.7.1 The Policy will support sustainability by ensuring that regulatory action is taken in a way that minimises environmental impact and seeks to pursue issues where it is proportionate to do so.

### **Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Community Protection Compliance Policy 2021-2026

Appendix 2 – Equality Impact Assessment

### **Background Papers**

Environmental Health and Licensing Compliance Policy 2016 – 2021

Regulators Code

Better Business for All Charter



# **WATFORD BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## **Community Protection**

### **Compliance Policy 2021 – 2026**

## 1. Introduction

- 1.1 This document provides detailed information on the approach, expectations and aims of officers working in the Community Protection service at Watford Borough Council when dealing with compliance issues.
- 1.2 Officers will work with members of the public and business to encourage compliance with legislation and regulations. The document details the reasoning behind this approach, the methods available to assist officers, the public and businesses, and the expected outcomes of this approach.
- 1.3 This document clearly explains what the public and businesses can expect from compliance teams and how they can engage in the compliance process.
- 1.4 Watford Borough Council is committed to continuously improving its approach to regulation in line with guidance issued by:

Office for Product Safety and Standards (part of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS)),  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/office-for-product-safety-and-standards>

Hertfordshire Better Business for All partnership program (BBfA)  
<http://www.hertfordshirelep.com/Better-Regulation.aspx>

and by following the Regulators Code,  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/regulators-code>

- 1.5 In particular, this policy sets out our approach on how we encourage and ensure compliance with a range of legislation and how we do this in the public interest. Compliance issues may arise when we deal with:
  - abandoned vehicles
  - alcohol, entertainment and late-night refreshment
  - animal welfare
  - anti-social behaviour
  - charity collections
  - dog fouling
  - drainage
  - environmental protection and pollution
  - filthy and verminous premises
  - food hygiene
  - gambling
  - health and safety at work
  - houses in multiple occupation
  - housing standards

## Appendix 1

- infectious diseases
- littering, fly-tipping and other environmental crimes
- pest control
- smoke-free legislation
- statutory nuisances such as noise, odours, vibration and light
- street trading
- taxis and private hire vehicles

This list is not comprehensive but gives an indication of the range of issues dealt with by the officers working in Community Protection.

- 1.6 By following this compliance policy the council aims to help the growth of Watford and to support the corporate themes contained in the Council Plan 2020-2024:

A council that serves our residents  
A thriving, diverse and creative town  
A healthy and happy town

Our Guiding Principles underpin how we deliver on our themes and commitments

Excellence	Work with partners to deliver excellent outcomes for our customers and communities.
Promotion	Promote Watford widely to maximise our town's potential.
Impact	Use our resources wisely to maximise financial, social and environmental impact.
Enterprise	Challenge ourselves to be ambitious and entrepreneurial.
Leadership	Bring people who care about the town together to get things done.
Caring	Respond thoughtfully to show our readiness to help others.

- 1.7 In developing this policy we have had regard to:

- the Human Rights Act 1998
- the statutory Regulators' Code issued under the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions act 2008
- the Code for Crown Prosecutors
- the Equality Act 2010

- 1.8 All decisions will be fair, independent and objective. The services covered by this compliance and enforcement policy will align with and meet the equality policies and objectives adopted by our council. We will aim to effectively support and promote access to our compliance and enforcement services recognising the diversity of the communities we serve and ensure that residents, organisations and businesses are treated equally and fairly through the delivery of our services. They will not be influenced by age, ethnicity, national origin, gender, religious or political belief, disabilities or sexual orientation. Due regard will be taken when dealing with children or other vulnerable people. Decisions will not be affected by improper or undue pressure from any source, including members.

## Appendix 1

1.9 We are committed to accountable and proportionate practices with clear policies supported by effective procedures. We will ensure officers are competent, apply compliance measures consistently and proportionately through training, suitable qualifications, and experience. Officers will consolidate their knowledge and experience through attendance on training courses, sharing best practice and keeping up to date with national guidance covering compliance.

1.10 We will have regard to evolving best practice in compliance and enforcement and will take account of any relevant specialist guidance, for example the Office for Product Safety and Standards publication on ethical business regulation which can be found here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/ethical-business-regulation>

## 2 Approval, review and exercise of powers

2.1 We consulted businesses and residents on this policy between 12 July and 23 August 2021.

2.2 Community Protection enforcement powers are delegated by the Council to the Group Head of Community and Environmental Services and the Head of Community Protection who in turn authorise officers on the basis of competency. The delegation is made in the Council's Constitution which sets out the how the council operates, how decisions are made and the procedures which are followed to ensure that these are efficient, transparent and accountable to local people. Further information on the Constitution is available online:

[https://www.watford.gov.uk/downloads/file/53/part\\_1\\_summary\\_and\\_explanation](https://www.watford.gov.uk/downloads/file/53/part_1_summary_and_explanation)

2.3 Team Managers are authorised to issue a Simple Caution and, in the case of certain housing offences, the application for a Rent Repayment Order and/or issuing of a financial penalty as an alternative to prosecution. In cases of doubt as to a particular course of action other than authorising a prosecution the Group Head of Community and Environmental Services shall make the final decision. The Group Head of Democracy and Governance, may authorise a prosecution.

2.4 We will review compliance policies and procedures on a regular basis and in the light of changes in legislation, case-law or best practice.

## 3 Policy objectives

3.1 Our approach is intended to:

- protect individuals, the community and the environment from harm
- change the behaviour of individuals, organisations and businesses who breach legislation
- eliminate any financial gain or benefit from non-compliance
- protect those affected by non-compliance
- be responsive and consider what is appropriate in the particular circumstances

- be proportionate having regard to the nature of the offence and the harm caused and the individuals circumstances
- deter future non-compliance

## 4 Key principles

4.1 Wherever possible our officers will adopt an approach of informal resolution. This will involve:

- clearly identifying the nature of any actual or potential legislative breach;
- giving the party responsible for the breach the opportunity to remedy it.

We recognise that this approach is not always possible. There may be some circumstances where the impact of an offence is so serious that a single breach requires urgent formal action. This can be where an investigation takes a significant amount of resource due to the nature of the evidence, and the difficulty in gathering the evidence, required to prove the offence. For example, these types of issues can include (but are not limited to) actions leading to discrimination, a negative impact on the environment, and other offences which cause harm to residents such as dog-fouling, fly-tipping and littering. In these types of cases it may be necessary, reasonable and proportionate to take stronger action following a single incident in order to prevent further offences.

4.2 Although each case shall be considered on its own facts and on its own merits, there are general principles set out in this policy that apply to the way in which we approach every case.

### 4.3 **Standards**

4.3.1 We will always make clear when there is a legal requirement to be followed, and under which legislation it is required. We will always make clear the difference between legal requirements and recommended best practice.

4.3.2 In doing this we will have regard to the relevant legislation, codes of practice and guidance when determining the approach to take.

4.3.3 We will document in writing what we have had regard to throughout the course of any investigation or compliance procedure.

4.3.4 All investigations will follow best professional practice and legal requirements. Where necessary as part of the investigation process (for example, where formal legal action is possible), the party responsible for the breach may be formally interviewed under the Police and Criminal Evidence Act 1984, be given the opportunity to establish a statutory defence, and have the opportunity to give an explanation or make any additional comments about the allegations. Evidence will be gathered and used in accordance with the Criminal Procedure and Investigations Act 1996 and not kept for longer than required under the Act's code of practice.

### 4.4 **Openness**

- 4.4.1 We recognise the need to maintain public confidence in our ability to protect and to regulate. This is achieved by promoting consistency, proportionality and accountability. We will also aim to work in order of priority and direct our work accordingly, using national risk assessment schemes, local intelligence and the priorities of the council and its partners. We will clearly explain to those affected by breaches of legislation the action we take or why we are unable to take action. We will also make clear the difference between statutory requirements or advice, or guidance about what is desirable or good practice but not compulsory.
- 4.4.2 Where action is necessary to comply with legislative requirements, it will be clearly explained, as far as reasonably practicable in writing and verbally, why the action is necessary and when it must be carried out by. We will discuss what is needed before taking formal action, apart from when urgent action is required to protect public health, public safety or the environment, or evidence to support enforcement action would be otherwise lost.
- 4.4.3 In line with the Publicising Sentencing Outcomes government guidance we will publicise the results of prosecutions and simple cautions, although we will not publicise an individual's personal details when a simple caution has been accepted. If we receive information that may lead to formal legal action we will notify the source of that complaint as soon as is practicable of any intended enforcement action, unless this could impede an investigation or pose a safety risk.
- 4.4.4 All parties concerned will be kept informed of progress during our investigations and any enforcement action. Confidentiality will be maintained and personal information only released in accordance with legal requirements or in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR.
- 4.5 **Helpfulness**
- 4.5.1 We believe that prevention is better than cure. We will offer information and advice to those whom we regulate and seek to secure compliance without bureaucracy and excessive cost. We will encourage individuals, organisations and businesses to put community, public health, public safety and the environment first. We will ensure that, wherever practicable, our compliance services are effectively co-ordinated to minimise unnecessary overlaps and time delays.
- 4.5.2 When a breach has been identified that does not present an immediate risk to health, safety or the environment, we may arrange follow-up visits to allow the business owner or individual time to comply with their legal obligations. Where immediate action is not needed, we will consider agreeing an action plan to assist the business or individual to work towards compliance, and a time scale for the successful implementation and completion of this action plan.
- 4.6 **Complaints**

## Appendix 1

4.6.1 Written explanation of any rights of appeal against formal legal action will be given at the time action is taken. We cannot advise on the merits or details of any appeal. Please see section 9 below about how to complain about the service we provide.

### 4.7 ***Proportionality***

4.7.1 We will balance action taken against risks and costs. Actions to achieve compliance will be proportionate to any risks to public health and safety, and the seriousness of any breach. Therefore, an informal warning is unlikely to be a suitable disposal for a significant infringement leading to serious injury just as a prosecution is generally unsuitable for a minor administrative or technical oversight. Proportionate action also involves judging the extent of the efforts made by individuals, organisations or businesses in order to comply with the law.

### 4.8 ***Consistency***

4.8.1 Our officers will endeavour to take a similar approach in similar circumstances to achieve similar ends; consistency does not mean taking exactly the same approach concerning each breach. We will endeavour to be consistent in the advice we give, whether over time to the same business, or to different businesses.

4.8.2 We will participate in county-wide and regional compliance arrangements to encourage consistency amongst other regulators and to share best practice. Where an investigation reveals information that could lead to further investigation by other agencies, we will cooperate and coordinate with the relevant agency to maximise the effectiveness of our advice, assistance or formal legal action.

4.8.3 We participate in the Primary Authority scheme as part of the Regulatory Enforcement and Sanctions Act 2008, and follow any inspection plans issued by Primary Authorities as part of those arrangements. We will give notice of proposed legal action to relevant Primary Authorities before action is taken against organisations registered under the scheme, apart from specific urgent cases where this is not required.

## 5 **Compliance techniques**

5.1 We use a range of techniques to encourage and secure compliance with legal obligations, including:

- informal advisory visits and meetings
- mediation
- education, awareness-raising and advice
- formal training
- risk-based inspections
- proactive and reactive visits
- direct observation
- test baiting of vermin
- test purchasing
- sampling

## Appendix 1

- auditing

5.2 We are committed to working proactively and positively to encourage risks to be managed and compliance achieved and we will consult service users on the best approach to doing this.

## 6 Bringing legal action

6.1 We will take account of different factors when considering the appropriate approach to achieve compliance, including:

- any actual or potential harm or loss to an individual
- the risk that non-compliance poses to public health, public safety or the environment
- the conduct of individuals, organisations or businesses to compliance, such as failing to follow previous advice or comply with statutory notices
- evidence of pre-meditation
- obstruction of officers
- national and local priorities for enforcement, including where the offence is widespread throughout the Borough but is not itself serious
- statutory guidance and codes of practise
- legal advice
- any commercial benefit accrued because of the non-compliance.

6.1.1 The following actions are available to us in the event of any contravention:

### 6.2 ***No further action, taking informal action or giving advice***

6.2.1 This may apply where an investigation reveals no offence has occurred or where the offending party makes a ready admission of the breach and takes immediate steps to remedy it presenting no risks to public safety, public health or the environment. No further action will be appropriate where the evidence is inadequate or where formal enforcement is inappropriate because the contravener is elderly, frail, has poor mental or serious ill health, and to pursue the case would be detrimental to their wellbeing. All persons involved will be advised as to why no further action is being taken

6.2.2 We may give verbal or written advice where we have a high degree of confidence the breach will be properly remedied or not repeated. We will clearly identify any contraventions of the law and give advice on how to correct them, including a reasonable deadline (agreed where possible) for when this should be completed. This will take into account the seriousness of the contravention and the implications for non-compliance.

### 6.3 ***Issuing warnings***

6.3.1 We may give verbal or written warnings. The fact that a verbal warning has been given may be recorded in a case file for future reference. Written warnings are normally final,

and failure to comply or repeated breaches of the same or a similar contravention are likely to result in an escalation in the approach to achieving compliance.

#### **6.4 *Offering a Simple Caution***

6.4.1 Cautions will be considered in line the Home Office guidance in circular 16/2008. Simple Cautions are issued with the consent of the person responsible for a breach and where a prosecution would otherwise be justified. Although an admission of guilt, a caution is not a sentence or a criminal conviction.

6.4.2 Before offering a simple caution, we must be satisfied that:

- there is sufficient evidence to prove the case before a court
- there has been a free and voluntary admission of guilt
- it must be in the public interest to use a simple caution to dispose of the offence
- the individual or business owner is over the age of 18

6.4.3 We will also take into account whether the person responsible for a breach has received a simple caution within the previous two years in accordance with Section 17(4) of the Criminal Justice and Courts Act 2015

6.4.4 The refusal of a person responsible for a breach to be cautioned, despite admitting their guilt, will normally result in a prosecution, although a prosecution cannot be brought once a simple caution has been accepted for that offence. A failure to accept a caution may be material consideration when deciding whether to institute a prosecution.

#### **6.5 *Bringing a prosecution***

6.5.1 Where circumstances warrant it, we will prosecute without giving any opportunity for the remedy of the situation and without any prior warning. Prosecutions will be considered where:

- it is appropriate in the circumstances as a way to draw general attention to the need for compliance with legal duties
- there is a risk to community health and safety or of environmental damage as a consequence of the breach
- the breach was as a result of a deliberate, reckless or negligent act
- the approach of the individual or business through repeated breaches, persistent poor standards or ignoring formal advice and warnings warrants it

6.5.2 Prosecutions will always be considered where:

- there has been a blatant disregard for the law
- there is a refusal to achieve minimum legal requirements
- the offence involves a risk to public health, safety or wellbeing, harm to the environment or where an unacceptable business advantage is gained
- the individual or business has failed to correct potential risks after being given a reasonable opportunity to do so.

## Appendix 1

- the offence involves failure to comply with a statutory notice
- evidence suggests the offence was premeditated
- there is a history of similar offences
- an officer was intentionally obstructed or deceived in the course of their duties
- consideration of factors set out in paragraph 6.1 result in prosecution being the correct and proportionate response.

6.5.3 The decision to prosecute will take account of the evidential and public interest tests in the Code for Crown Prosecutors issued under the Prosecution of Offences Act 1985 by the Director of Public Prosecutions. These include:

- the seriousness of the offence. A prosecution is more likely to be required where an offence is more serious;
- the level of culpability by the person responsible for a breach, such as their level of involvement; whether the offence was premeditated or planned; or if they have previous convictions or cautions;
- the age and state of mental or physical health of the person responsible for a breach
- the likelihood of the offence being continued, repeated or escalated;
- any remedial action taken by the person responsible for a breach, (although an offer to pay compensation to a victim or take similar action will never by itself preclude a prosecution);
- whether a prosecution is a proportionate response to the likely outcome.

6.5.4 We will not prosecute unless we are satisfied there is credible, admissible and reliable evidence that the offence has been committed by the individual or business and there is a realistic prospect of conviction. We will continuously review our enforcement approach when new evidence is received and periodically during the course of formal enforcement action.

6.5.5 The courts often have discretion in the penalties they can impose, and many offences benefit from a statutory defence. We will not be generally deterred from bringing a prosecution when it is right to do so solely because the courts are likely to issue a nominal penalty following a conviction, or solely because the individual or business appears to have established a statutory defence as it is for the individual or business to demonstrate to the court why they should benefit from that defence.

6.5.6 We will always seek to recover our costs in investigating and prosecuting offences.

6.5.7 People should be able to rely on decisions taken by us. Normally, if we tell a defendant that there will not be a prosecution, or that the prosecution has been stopped, the case will not start again. Occasionally there are reasons why we will overturn a decision not to prosecute or to deal with the case by way of an out-of-court disposal or when it will restart the prosecution, particularly if the case is serious.

6.5.8 These reasons include:

- cases where a new look at the original decision shows that it was wrong and, in order to maintain confidence in the criminal justice system, a prosecution should be brought despite the earlier decision;
- cases which are stopped so that more evidence (which is likely to become available in the fairly near future) can be collected and prepared. In these cases, we will tell the defendant that the prosecution may well start again;
- cases which are stopped because of a lack of evidence but where more significant evidence is discovered later.

## **6.6 Alternatives to Prosecution**

- 6.6.1 Fixed penalty notices (FPN) are available as an alternative to prosecution for some offences. A recipient of an FPN does not accept criminal liability by paying the associated fine, which brings an end to the matter. Where the law allows FPNs to be issued, we may choose to administer those on a first occasion without issuing a warning. However, a failure to pay an FPN will result in an escalation of enforcement action including prosecution for the original offence to preserve the integrity of the regulatory regime.
- 6.6.2 For certain housing offences as set out in law, such as failure to comply with an improvement or overcrowding notice or operating an unlicensed House in Multiple Occupation (HMO), a financial penalty may be imposed as an alternative to prosecution. In such cases, a notice of intention to impose a financial penalty will be given setting out the amount of the proposed penalty, reasons for imposing it and information about the right to make written representation before a decision is made to issue a final penalty notice. Where a final penalty notice is issued, there will be a right of appeal to a First Tier Tribunal.

## **6.7 Community Protection Warnings and Community Protection Notices**

- 6.7.1 The council has the power to issue a Community Protection Notice (CPN) requiring an individual (aged 16 or over) or a business engaged in anti-social behaviour activities to stop what they are doing if that activity has a negative impact on any individual or the environment or the community. If necessary, the individual or business must repair any damage they may have caused and undertake steps to prevent such further negative impact.
- 6.7.2 Community Protection Notices will be issued where there is evidence of ongoing issues in accordance with section 43, Anti-Social Behaviour Act 2014, contained in Part 4 of the Act.
- 6.7.3 In cases where a Community Protection Notice is considered an appropriate measure, in the first instance a Community Protection Warning (CPW) will be issued. Breach of a CPW

does not carry any financial penalty but may result in further compliance action being taken.

6.7.4 A CPW is issued for 6 months. Should anti-social behaviour persist within this time, a CPN will be issued. Breach of a CPN carries a penalty on conviction of up to £2500 for individuals or £20000 for organisations and businesses.

6.7.5 A Fixed Penalty Notice (see 6.6) can be issued for a breach of a Community Protection Notice. The current FPN fee is for £200.

## **6.8 Other Remedies**

6.8.1 We will also use other powers where appropriate in order to protect the community. This will include working with our partners, for example, the police, applying for orders under the Anti-Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 and using other legislation where necessary and proportionate.

## **6.9 Issuing statutory notices**

6.9.1 We may serve notices under various legislation requiring specific actions to be taken or certain activities to cease. Notices may require activities to cease immediately where there is an imminent or immediate threat to health, safety, environmental damage or nuisance. In other circumstances notices will be issued with a reasonable time for compliance, agreed wherever possible with the recipient of the notice, taking into account the seriousness of the contravention, setting out the remedial actions needed to comply with the notice, the implications of non-compliance and the appeal period for that notice. Some legislation prescribes the action to be taken which might include the service of a notice. However we will generally issue notices if previous warnings or advice have been ignored.

6.9.2 All notices will be expressed in plain language, make clear the consequences of failing to comply, and include details of any applicable appeals procedure. All notices will be signed and served by appropriately authorised officers.

6.9.3 Failure to comply with certain notices will enable the council to do the work instead, commonly referred to as “works in default “. We may issue these notices when all other attempts to secure compliance have been exhausted, and will give warning of our intention to issue a notice except where this is impractical in order to protect public health and safety or the environment. We will then charge the recipient of the notice for any costs incurred in carrying out the work, and this may lead to a charge being registered against the land usually as a local land charge. This will allow the council to recoup the costs from any future sale of the property or exercise a right of sale as if it were a mortgagee. Costs will include all costs as well as the cost of the work, for example, officer time spent dealing with the matter. The council may still prosecute for not complying with the original statutory notice as well as carrying out the works.

## **6.10 Licensing decisions**

- 6.10.1 Many of the licences and permissions we issue contain powers to revoke, refuse, vary or review them in the event of non-compliance with obligations in those authorisations, or following a conviction for certain offences.
- 6.10.2 Premises licensed under the Licensing Act 2003 can be reviewed by any resident or group of residents, elected members, the licensing authority and other Responsible Authorities, for example, the police, the fire brigade or the planning authority. A licence review can be initiated at any time and can lead to a consideration of the licence or part of the licence or the conditions attached to a licence if the actions of the premises are detrimental and undermining the licensing objectives.
- 6.10.3 The maximum term for a HMO licence is 5 years, however shorter term licenses can be issued if there are concerns about the management of the property that can be resolved within a shorter licensing period. For example where the property is breaching planning legislation or there are concerns about the financial status of the landlord. We will issue shorter term licenses where it is appropriate to do so.
- 6.10.4 As a general rule and in line with this compliance policy we will take decisions regarding the revoking of, or refusal of licences when all other approaches to assist compliance, short of cautions or prosecutions, have been exhausted. This may include suspending licences in the event of a breach, or refusing a licence when activities have been carried on without the requisite licence being in place. Whether we take such a decision before, after or as an alternative to a prosecution or caution will depend on the legal powers available to us and the risks presented by the situation. How we exercise our professional discretion in such cases and will generally be guided by:
- whether the actions of the individual or business are so serious they ought to face trial in court
  - the impact that a licensing decision will have in correcting any breach
  - the impact that a licensing decision may have on the individual or business and the impact on their ability to continue operating their licensable activity (this is not relevant to matters related to hackney carriage or private hire licences).
  - the council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy
- 6.10.5 Decisions regarding varying, revoking or refusing a licence and instigating prosecutions serve different purposes – licensing decisions about hackney carriage drivers, for example, concern their fitness and propriety to hold a licence, whilst a prosecution serves the objectives outlined in section 6.5 above. Similarly, reviews under the Licensing Act 2003 and Gambling Act 2005 are designed to be more corrective than punitive in nature, which should be a matter reserved for the courts.
- 6.10.6 In relation to licensed hackney carriage and private hire drivers, proprietors and operators, alongside the compliance principles contained in this policy, we will use the following approach when investigating offences:
- If it is safe to do so we will notify licence holders of complaints received against them whether proven or not so that they can be discussed. This approach will ensure

transparency with licence holders in how the licensing team approach the matter of complaints. As with all regulated businesses, licence holders can be subject to malicious and false complaints and it is right that they are aware of how these matters are concluded;

- Our investigation into intelligence reports and/or complaints will look for evidence to either prove or disprove alleged offences – this will usually include a discussion with the licence holder. On occasion, for the protection of the identity of a complainant in cases involving sensitive matters such as allegations of a sexual nature, it may not be right to discuss the details of the complaint with the licence holder directly in the first instance;
- We will not take account of a licence holder’s previous licensing history during the investigation of a specific complaint. Each complaint must be investigated on the basis of the evidence available;
- If there is no evidence, or insufficient evidence, to prove the specific complaint beyond reasonable doubt, a decision on further action may still be taken where the nature and severity of the alleged offence warrants it. Supporting evidence by way of previous reports will be considered if they exist and indicate the same or similar behaviour;
- If an offence is proven to the necessary standard of proof for the proposed action (civil or criminal burden of proof), the offence shall be considered and action taken in accordance with the principles in this compliance policy and/or the policy considerations contained within the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy;
- All proven complaints will be considered in future enforcement or licensing decisions.

6.10.7 For all proven offences licence holders will at least be informed of the offence and we will explain how to prevent further offences. Generally, where an offence has resulted in a complaint, licence holders can expect to receive at least a formal written warning.

6.10.8 Licence holders who receive repeated written warnings or show a history of similar offences, or those who have been subject to complaints which give the authority reason to further investigate the fitness and propriety of the licence holder, will be invited to attend a Case Review. This is a meeting with the Head of Community Protection to discuss a licence holder’s conduct, to encourage behaviour change, to understand barriers to this and to clearly explain the consequences of any continued non-compliance. A Case Review may result in the following actions although this is not an exhaustive list of options available:

- no further action
- further investigation
- written advice
- formal warning
- simple caution
- referral for prosecution
- suspension of licence
- recommendation to the Group Head of Service for revocation of licence

Any licence holder invited to attend a Case Review will be entitled to bring a friend, colleague, union representative or other legal representative.

## Appendix 1

6.10.9 Where deemed appropriate we may suspend or revoke a licence. Where a suspension of the licence is deemed a proportionate response to the offence, the length of time of suspension will be determined by the overriding requirement to protect the public. The licence holder's previous history will be taken into account when making this decision along with other factors such as the conduct of the licence holder, the impact of the offence, etc.

Where relevant, a decision will also be guided by the council's Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy.

6.10.10 Except in cases where it appears that in the interests of public safety it is necessary to require it, no suspension or revocation of a licence will take immediate effect. In these circumstances the decision will not take effect until the appeal period of 21 days has expired. During this time, the licence holder has the right to appeal against the suspension or revocation notice by applying to the Magistrates' Court.

6.10.11 The power to suspend or revoke a licence is delegated to the Group Head of Community and Environmental Services, the Head of Community Protection and officers within the licensing team.

6.10.12 Any driver, proprietor or operator who re-offends after suspension or a successful prosecution, or commits a first offence which gives sufficient cause for concern, will be referred to the Group Head of Community and Environmental Services or the Head of Community Protection. This referral may take place without the licence holder first attending a Case Review. This referral will allow for immediate consideration of the continued fitness and propriety of the licence holder.

6.10.13 In the most serious cases it may be necessary to revoke or suspend a licence immediately and without initial correspondence with the licence holder.

6.10.14 In cases where there is no immediate risk and no need to revoke or suspend a licence immediately in the interests of public safety, a licence holder who is referred in this way will be given an opportunity to make written representations against any recommendation to revoke or suspend before a final decision is made.

6.10.15 In cases where it is appropriate, for example where an investigation or prosecution has been undertaken by another authority and guilt established, an officer may refer a licence holder directly to the Group Head of Community and Environmental Services or the Head of Community Protection.

6.10.16 Appeals against revocation or the refusal to renew a licence can be made to the appropriate Court within 21 days of being notified of our decision.

### **6.11 Repayment of Monies**

6.11.1 We believe that people should not profit from their criminal behaviour. When people have been convicted of offences and it can be shown that they have made money from

their criminal lifestyle, we may seek Confiscation Orders under the Proceeds of Crime Act 2002.

6.11.2 Where a landlord has committed certain housing offences (whether or not they have been convicted), a First Tier Tribunal has the power to make a Rent Repayment Order (RRO) to require a landlord to repay back to the Council an amount of universal credit, including housing benefit, in respect of rent under the tenancy. Where the law allows, such as failure to comply with an improvement notice or prohibition order or operating an unlicensed HMO, we will first issue a notice of intention to apply for a RRO to the landlord, setting out the amount we are seeking to recover and giving a right to make written representation before a decision is made to apply for an RRO. Once we have considered any representations, will then either make an application for a RRO to the First Tier Tribunal or not.

## **7 Other policies or legislation**

7.1 In considering decisions in relation to food safety legislation and health and safety at work we must have regard to the Food Standards Agency's Food Law Code of Practice and the Health & Safety Executive's Enforcement Management Model.

7.2 Our statutory policy under the Licensing Act 2003 sets out our considerations to compliance and enforcement under that Act.

7.3 Our statutory policy under the Gambling Act 2005 sets out our considerations to compliance and enforcement under that Act.

7.4 Our Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Licensing Policy sets out our considerations to compliance and enforcement of holders of driver, vehicle and operator licences.

7.5 We have published minimum standards for tackling anti-social behaviour in conjunction with our partners.

7.6 This policy should be read in conjunction with those documents, and will take precedence in the event of any conflict.

## **8 Other enforcement partners**

8.1 Some investigations will reveal offences that are solely or jointly enforced by other agencies. These can include other local authorities, the police, fire service, trading standards, Gambling Commission, HM Revenues & Customs, Immigration and Customs Enforcement, Health & Safety Executive or the Environment Agency.

8.2 Where two offences arise out of the same set of facts but are enforced by two agencies, we will agree on a case-by-case basis the most appropriate action as each agency may decide a different approach and/or disposal is justified.

## Appendix 1

- 8.3 We will share information with other enforcement agencies where legislation permits, in accordance with agreed protocols and in accordance with the Data Protection Act 2018 and GDPR.

### **9 Customer standards and Complaints (including ombudsman)**

For details of our customer standards about how you can expect us to treat you, please visit [https://www.watford.gov.uk/info/20274/customer\\_services/1172/contact/4](https://www.watford.gov.uk/info/20274/customer_services/1172/contact/4) or ask one of our officers for a copy.

DRAFT

Comments on this policy to:

EH Manager (Business)  
Environmental Health  
Watford Borough Council  
Town Hall  
Watford  
Herts  
WD17 3EX  
[Envhealth@watford.gov.uk](mailto:Envhealth@watford.gov.uk)

DRAFT



# Equality Impact Analysis

<b>Title of policy, function or service</b>	Community Protection Compliance Policy 2021-2026
<b>Lead officer</b>	Jamie Mackenzie
<b>Person completing the EIA</b>	Jamie Mackenzie
<b>Type of policy, function or service:</b>	Existing (reviewed) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> X New/Proposed <input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Version &amp; Date</b>	Version 1.0 01 September 2021

## **1. Background**

Watford Borough Council (the council) is the regulatory authority for environmental health and licensing matters within the borough. As a regulator, the council is required to publish a policy on how it will approach regulation of businesses.

In 2011, the council developed an Environmental Health and Licensing Compliance Policy to ensure that decisions and processes related to compliance were clearly explained for all residents, visitors and businesses. This policy (the Policy), now named the Community Protection Compliance Policy 2021-2026, ensures that decisions are fair and consistent, and that the right standards are applied to ensure we achieve the highest levels of compliance with national and local regulations.

The Policy is regularly reviewed and the current policy is now due for review. Prior to any changes to the existing policy taking effect, a public consultation is carried out.

## **2. Focus of the Equality Impact Analysis**

This Equality Impact Assessment has been created to ensure that the Policy is fair, transparent and does not disadvantage or unlawfully discriminate against any person or group.

## **3. Engagement and consultation**

A full public consultation on the draft policy took place between 12 July 2021 and 23 August 2021

This included:

- placing the information about the consultation, and the various methods of responding to the consultation, on the Watford Borough Council website
- notification through the council Communications team to various publication including the local newspaper
- directly notifying a number of local and national organisations and authorities, including business forums and membership organisations, licensing authorities, national charities, disability advocacy groups and trade publications
- an audio reading of the proposed policy and consultation documents to be made available through collaboration with the Watford Talking Newspaper

There was one response to the consultation. This response included, among a number of suggestions, an improvement to the detail concerning equality contained in section 1.8. This change was made to the policy.

#### **4. What we know about Watford**

##### **Age and Health**

Watford has a younger population than Hertfordshire and England as a whole.

Those who report ill health and who are limited in mobility is marginally lower than the UK average

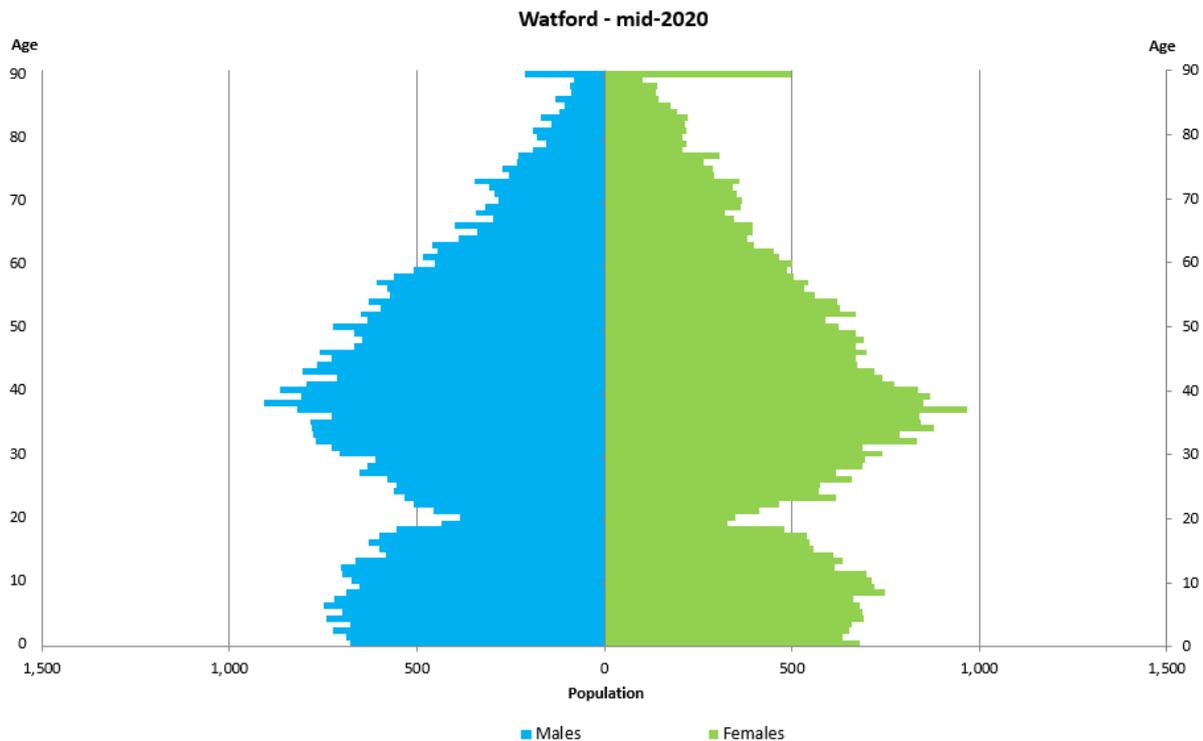
In context, the 2011 Census reports that 5500 people reported day to day activities being limited a lot by health and disability issues. Almost 7000 residents reported day to day activities being limited a bit. It seems reasonable that Census 2021 figures, given the increase in population, could be somewhere around 6,500 - 7000.

Around 85% of the population of Watford state that they have 'good health' and just under 14% recorded a disability (from Census 2011). We do not have details as to what these disabilities are but they will include a wide range of physical and mental health disabilities or impairment. The council will receive the outputs of Census 2021 from 2022, which will confirm a range of information on our resident population, including those with health and disability issues.

The 2019 NHS Health Profile's (the most recent profile available) summary conclusion is that the health of people in Watford is 'varied' compared with the England average.

About 11% (2,305) of children live in low income families. Life expectancy for both men and women is similar to the England average. Life expectancy is 6.1 years lower for men and 2.9 years lower for women in the most deprived areas of Watford than in the least deprived areas.

## Sex



## Ethnicity

Watford has a very diverse population, more so than the rest of Hertfordshire; it is one of the strengths of our town and what makes us such a vibrant and diverse town.

For Watford, the Census 2011 shows the following main breakdown in terms of ethnicity: White British (61.9%), White other (7.7%), Pakistani (6.7%), British Indian (5.5%), British other Asian (4.4%) and African (3.5%), White Irish (2.3%) and Caribbean (1.7%).

In 2016, the ONS published population estimates by ethnicity. This did not report ethnicities to the level of granularity of the Census. The estimates for 2016 were: White British (59% - 57,000 residents), Asian / Asian British (19% - 19,000 residents), All Other White (12% - 12,000 residents), Black / African / Caribbean / Black British (4% - 4,000 residents), Mixed / Multiple Ethnic Group (4% - 4,000 residents) and Other Ethnic Group (1% - 1,000 residents).

## Religion / belief

The religious breakdown in the Census 2011 of the main religions in Watford was: Christian (54.1%), Muslim (9.8%), Hindu (4.8%), with no religion stated at 21.4%.

## Sexual orientation

Watford has no specific data on sexual orientation. This was a new question for the Census 2021 so we will be able to benchmark in future.

## **Education and skills**

A skilled workforce supports the economic development and employment aspirations for Watford.

There has been a mostly increasing trend in educational attainment in Watford over the last few years. Watford's working age population has the fourth highest percentage (44.4%) in Hertfordshire of those with qualifications at NVQ 4 and above

## **Deprivation**

The English Indices of Deprivation (IoD) 2019 were published by the Government in September 2019, and updates the previous 2015 Indices, published in September 2015. The Indices of Deprivation measure relative levels of deprivation in 32,844 small areas or neighbourhoods, called Lower-layer Super Output Areas, in England

The IoD2019 is based on 39 separate indicators, organised across seven distinct domains of deprivation which are combined and weighted to calculate the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2019

In the IMD 2019, Watford is ranked 195 out of 317 authorities, putting it in the 7<sup>th</sup> decile nationally. This means that, overall, Watford is less deprived than half the authorities in England.

Watford is the third most deprived authority in Hertfordshire. (Stevenage and Broxbourne are the most deprived.) However, three Hertfordshire authorities are among the 10% least deprived authorities in England (Three Rivers, East Herts and St Albans).

Overall, Watford is not an area with significant deprivation issues and the majority of the LSOAs within the town are in the bottom 50% of LSOAs nationally for deprivation; the borough's position has improved relative to that of 2015.

The combined deprivation index, which weights income and employment more heavily than the other domains, obscures the more deprived areas in Watford, which are affected by crime, living environment deprivation, health and disability, and education, skills and training deprivation in particular. This is, at least in part, because income and employment deprivation are less of an issue for Watford than for other areas.

## **5. How will the council ensure equality is promoted by the Policy?**

Watford Borough Council is committed to championing equality and embracing diversity across the full range of our services, whether we deliver the service ourselves or through partnership, and in our role as an employer.

To assist in gathering responses from people with a broad range of protected characteristics officers of the Community Protection service have actively sought to notify and engage as many residents, businesses and groups as possible.

There are a number of people with protected characteristics who could be impacted by the proposed policy and it is essential that all views are considered when determining the impact of the Policy.

Under the Equality Act 2010, three areas need to be considered when analysing the equality impact of the Corporate Plan:

1. **eliminate** discrimination, harassment, victimisation and any other conduct that is prohibited by or under the Act
2. **advance** equality of opportunity between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not share it
3. **foster** good relations between people who share a relevant protected characteristic and people who do not

#### A. Positive impacts

- Following a comprehensive consultation the council can be satisfied that the consultation provided opportunity for all residents, visitors and business operators to have their say on the final policy, and that the final policy, as amended by consultation responses, and as a policy that directly impacts a person's ability to access a business, run a business, use local services and enjoy a high quality of life as a resident or visitor to the borough, is fair and proportionate for all.
- Following consultation and a period of review by officers we can be sure that any additional safeguards against discriminatory practice or impact have been added prior to consideration by the Licensing Committee. The Policy supports business by setting clear guidelines, and by helping to promote the high standards on offer in Watford. This should have a positive impact on all those with protected characteristics and particularly those with additional vulnerabilities.
- We know that many people who run their own business do so as sole-traders or with very small teams and that access to resources to assist in compliance may be difficult to come by or to understand. To address this the council works hard to educate and to offer assistance to business owners whenever possible. Against this, the council must balance the need to ensure public safety and access to a fair and equitable environment for all. This will mean taking enforcement action against businesses that are non-compliant and those which, following advice and assistance, persist in being non-compliant.
- We know that many people who access services in Watford rent homes, visit food

premises, buy goods or services and use transport systems such as hackney carriages and private hire vehicle services have a range of needs and that these customers must be protected from illegal practice, anti-social behaviour and other activities that are detrimental to quality of life and/or harmful to health.

- We know that the addition of information relating to Community Protection Notices and changes to licensing sanctions will increase the perception of safety among the community of Watford.

## **B. Negative impacts**

There should be no negative impacts to the implementation of a fair and proportionate compliance policy. Safeguards against discrimination, and clear statements on working with those who have protected characteristics and/or a range of additional needs, have been made in the Policy. Potential barriers to accessing and understanding the Policy are being addressed through improved communications and options for alternative versions (e.g. translation or large print)

## **6. Overall conclusion**

Overall we can be confident that the Community Protection Compliance Policy 2021-2026 will advance equality of opportunity in Watford. The Policy should reduce instances of discrimination against all those with protected characteristics and will make it more likely that instances of illegal behaviour are dealt with effectively and in a timely manner.

**Summary of potential positive and negative impacts on protected characteristics**

<b>Protected Characteristic</b>	<b>Positive</b>	<b>Negative</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Reasons for decision</b>
<b>Age</b>	<b>X</b>			A clear policy on compliance that is proportionate and easy for all to understand is key to advancing equality of opportunity and to improving feelings of safety and wellbeing in the community.
<b>Disability</b>	<b>X</b>			A clear policy on compliance that is proportionate and easy for all to understand is key to advancing equality of opportunity and to improving feelings of safety and wellbeing in the community.
<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>X</b>	<b>X</b>		<p>A clear policy on compliance that is proportionate and easy for all to understand is key to advancing equality of opportunity and to improving feelings of safety and wellbeing in the community.</p> <p>There could be a negative impact on ethnicity if steps are not taken to ensure that the policy is well communicated and people where English is not their first language are not clear on the implications of the Policy.</p>
<b>Sex</b>	<b>X</b>			A clear policy on compliance that is proportionate and easy for all to understand is key to advancing equality of opportunity and to improving feelings of safety and wellbeing in the community.
<b>Sexual orientation</b>	<b>X</b>			A clear policy on compliance that is proportionate and easy for all to understand is key to advancing equality of opportunity and to improving feelings of safety and wellbeing in the community.

Protected Characteristic	Positive	Negative	None	Reasons for decision
Religion	X			A clear policy on compliance that is proportionate and easy for all to understand is key to advancing equality of opportunity and to improving feelings of safety and wellbeing in the community.
Pregnancy/maternity	X			A clear policy on compliance that is proportionate and easy for all to understand is key to advancing equality of opportunity and to improving feelings of safety and wellbeing in the community.
Gender orientation	X			A clear policy on compliance that is proportionate and easy for all to understand is key to advancing equality of opportunity and to improving feelings of safety and wellbeing in the community.

### Summary of potential positive impacts and ways in which they can be ensured

Positive Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to ensure the positive impact
General increase in compliance with regulations	All	Implement policy as intended
Increased business for local service providers through improved reputation and ability to build a compliant business	All	
Better access to local goods and services	All	
Reduced instances of anti-social behaviour in the Borough	All	

### Summary of potential negative impacts and ways in which they can be removed or mitigated

Negative Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to mitigate the negative impact
Perception that regulation in Watford is difficult to navigate	All	A clear policy on compliance that is proportionate and easy for all to understand is key to advancing equality of opportunity and to improving feelings of safety and wellbeing in the community.
Barriers to accessing the Policy for individuals or groups where English is not a first language	Ethnicity	Information on the council website can be translated through the Browsealoud function. The council has a contract with Language Line so any individual request for translated support can be provided. In other cases translated material can be provided. Through its Covid experience, the

Negative Impact	Protected characteristics	Ways to mitigate the negative impact
		council has built a good understanding of the communication needs of Watford's diverse community.

**This EIA has been approved by: Kathryn Robson, Executive Head of Strategy and Communications**