

3 Management and Partnership Working

3.1 The development of a partnership strategy for the river presents a great opportunity to improve the management of the river corridor by clarifying roles and streamlining processes, encouraging more effective joint working between partners and other organisations on a range of river issues. The issues discussed in this section were identified through public and stakeholder consultation. Some management and maintenance issues are also addressed in other parts of the strategy, including section 4 (for example, maintenance of the Riverside Walk) and section 5 (for example, mooring and navigation).

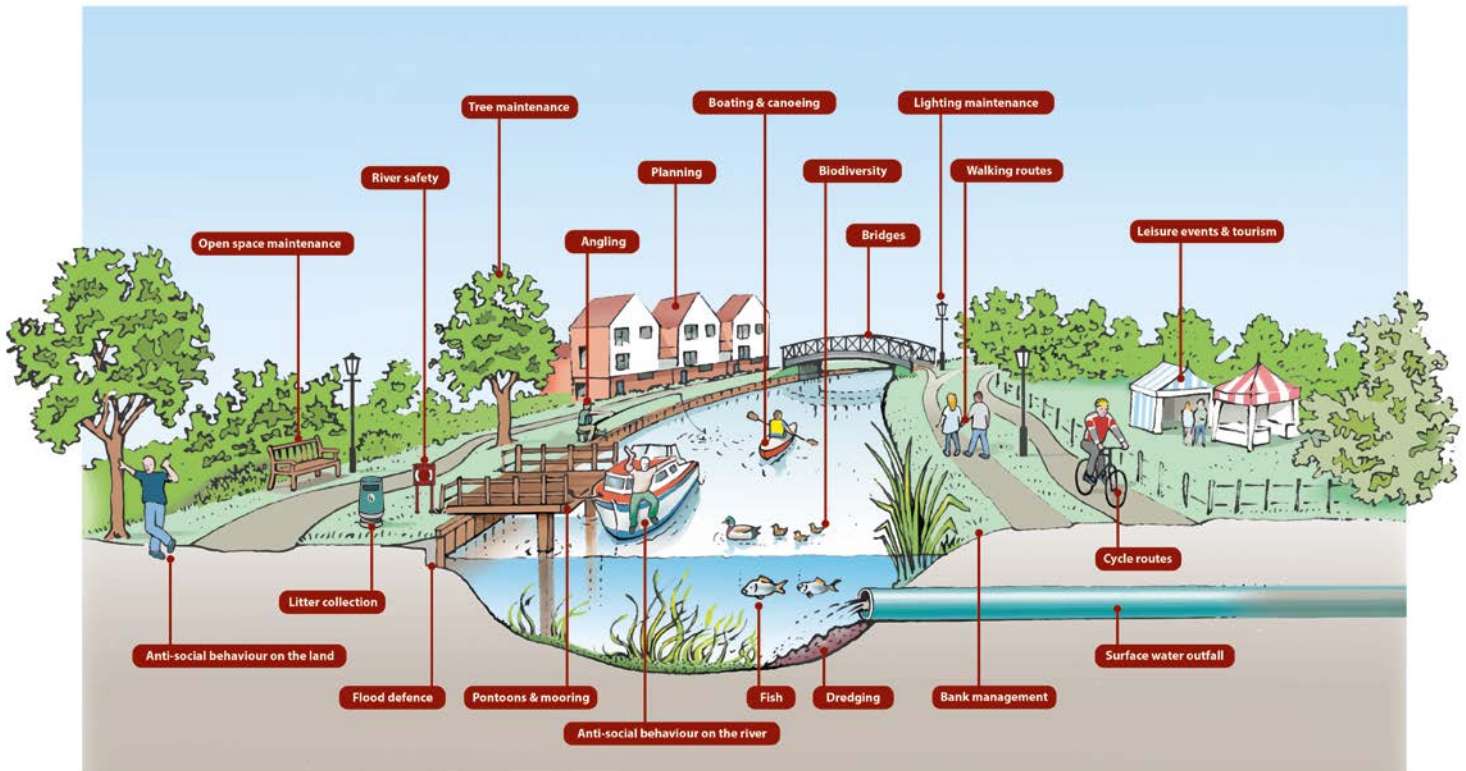
Roles and responsibilities

3.2 One of the key barriers to change and regeneration of the river corridor, as identified through the previous consultation, is the complexity of roles and statutory responsibilities within the partner organisations for different aspects of the river and a consequent lack of clarity about who does what on a day-to-day basis. This is not only frustrating for the public and local authority staff but has the potential to lead to inefficiencies in service delivery. The key roles and responsibilities of partner organisations are summarised below, with further information in appendix 1.

3.3 **Norwich City Council** is the city's local authority which operates a wide range of functions. It is the local planning authority, except for the river itself for which the Broads Authority is the relevant planning authority. It also owns and maintains a number of property assets, including the riverbed of the River Wensum downstream of New Mills, stretches of riverside walk, open space adjacent to the river, New Mills yard and Norwich Yacht Station. The **Broads Authority** is a Harbour Authority and Navigation authority, with a duty to maintain the Norwich Navigation providing access to the Port of Norwich for commercial craft. The Authority's duties and responsibilities apply to the River Wensum downstream of New Mills. It is also planning authority for development proposed for the river and its banks. **Norfolk County Council** is the Lead Local Flood Authority (LLFA) for Norfolk and is responsible for managing local flood risk and advising on the Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) proposed as part of new development. The county's bridge team has a duty to maintain bridge structures (apart from the surface of adopted highway bridges which remain the responsibility of the city council). The **Environment Agency's** responsibilities include regulating major industry and waste, treatment of contaminated land, water quality and resources, fisheries, and conservation and ecology. It is also responsible for managing the risk of flooding from main rivers, reservoirs, estuaries and the sea and supports flood and environmental incidents. (In addition, there are other organisations with relevant responsibilities within the river corridor including, for example, Norfolk Constabulary which has responsibility for enforcement).

3.4 Figure 1 illustrates some of the key areas of responsibility of partner authorities for the river (see Appendix 1 for a summary of who does what) and helps to illustrate the level of complexity when it comes to either managing or bringing about change in the river corridor.

Figure 1: Key areas of responsibility for the river corridor



3.5 Appendix 1 includes a detailed summary of key roles and responsibilities, with hyperlinks to relevant websites for further information. This aims to clarify these complex roles and make it clear which organisation is responsible for what activity, including maintenance, and includes information on partners' legal responsibilities.

3.6 In addition it is proposed to develop a gazetteer on the RWSP website, to be in place by the time of adoption of the strategy, containing contact details within the partner authorities for all key areas of responsibility for the river corridor.

Day-to-day management and maintenance

3.7 Closer working arrangements have been developed between partners during the process of developing the strategy, particularly between Norwich City Council and Broads Authority who have many responsibilities between them for the day-to-day-management of the river. For example a joint (internal) protocol has been developed by the Norwich City Council and Broads Authority to ensure an agreed approach to key management and enforcement issues including illegal mooring and sunken boats. This should lead to a more streamlined and effective approach to such issues in the future. Section 8 also proposes establishment of a Strategic Board and Delivery Board to ensure effective joint working on management issues, and effective communication and coordination on a range of management issues.

3.8 Appendix 1 shows that the primary responsibility for maintenance within the river corridor falls upon the city council. Its maintenance responsibilities include grounds maintenance, maintenance of trees on public land, of open spaces and of the riverside walk, maintenance of river structures (e.g. pontoons, moorings), litter picking, and lighting maintenance. Given recent reductions in the income of councils, funding for ongoing maintenance is constrained and represents a challenge to successful regeneration of the river corridor. In response, the strategy seeks opportunities to maximise volunteer and community input into maintenance and environmental improvements, and to explore potential for sponsorship for some ongoing maintenance where appropriate. The development of individual proposals must also fully address maintenance costs and identify how this will be funded so as not to add to existing council maintenance liabilities.

Clarification of existing policy framework and relevant guidance

3.9 Appendix 2 includes a summary of, and links to, relevant policy and guidance notes and best practice relating to the river. This includes relevant planning policy (for Norwich City Council and the Broads authority – the BA executive area includes parts of Broadland District Council and South Norfolk Council for planning purposes); relevant conservation area appraisal documents; biodiversity guidance; and BA guidance on moorings and other matters. This information will be uploaded to the

RWSP webpage once the strategy is adopted which will enable it to be further developed and updated as policy and guidance changes.

Health and Safety

3.10 The general approach taken to health and safety barriers by the City Council and Broads Authority is to locate barriers to the river in locations where there have been or are considered to be particular safety issues, most notably along Riverside. However a balance needs to be struck between the important aim of maximising safety adjacent to the river and the wish to maintain and improve accessibility to the river. The RWSP proposes that the need for new safety barriers will be considered on a case-by-case basis, balancing the need to address safety against the need to maintain or improve access.

Partnership working

3.11 There is potential for joint working with relevant external organisations whose objectives complement those of the strategy partnership to develop projects and initiatives that can maximise benefits for the river corridor. This includes not only provision of better physical links to the river from the city, and from the river to the wider countryside both up- and downstream, but also the need for more 'joined up thinking' in the approach to issues like health and well-being, including mental health issues, and economic development.

3.12 More effective joint working with key partners may also help identify additional sources of project funding, and it is recognised that funding bids are more likely to be successful when supported by a range of partner organisations.

3.13 Current and potential partners will depend on the nature of the projects delivered in the strategy. They include the following (not an exhaustive list): the Greater Norwich Growth Board which agrees Community Infrastructure Levy spending; Norfolk Trails in relation to access related projects, in particular making connections between the riverside walk and Norfolk Trails network; Natural England where consent is required for specific projects; Historic England and potentially the Heritage Lottery Fund in relation to projects that have an historic environment element; the Norwich Fringe Project in relation to the delivery of environment and access projects; Visit Norwich in relation to delivery of leisure and tourism projects or activities; Norwich BID in relation to business development and promotion; Norfolk Wildlife Trust in relation to biodiversity related projects; Anglian Water and the Environment Agency in relation to water quality; Active Norfolk and Healthy Norfolk in relation to encouraging greater levels of activity and wellbeing; and Heritage Lottery Fund in relation to projects with heritage potential. The RWSP has already worked with some of these bodies in developing the strategy and will continue to work with key partners and organisations where this can add value to the strategy. Local community groups and stakeholder groups can also play an important role in

the design and delivery of projects and in some cases it may be appropriate for projects to be community led, dependant on the nature of specific projects.

Community and stakeholder participation

3.14 There is also potential to work with local stakeholder groups and those who live and work in the vicinity of the river to help deliver the strategy. Opportunities will be taken where appropriate to encourage the active participation of these groups in the enhancement and management of the river corridor. Norwich City Council's 'Get Involved' programme coordinates community participation to address local issues, which can include litter reduction and environmental improvements for example. Such community activity can have multiple benefits, including improved health and wellbeing and community development for example, in addition to enhancing the local environment. The process of community participation also encourages local communities to identify important local assets, such as open spaces and heritage features, which can then be improved through targeted action. The RWSP will work with the council's Community Enabling Team to help focus such activity on the river corridor where possible, and to maximise the use of local volunteers with an interest in improving the river.

Social and health inequalities

Policy 1: The design of individual projects and implementation of the strategy will address health and social inequalities of local communities adjacent to the river where appropriate and feasible.

3.15 Norwich City Council's Corporate Plan³ highlights the importance of addressing the needs of the city's disadvantaged communities, and includes priorities to reduce social inequalities and promote health and wellbeing. It notes for example that in the most deprived areas the average life expectancy of men is nine years shorter than in the least deprived areas. The River Wensum flows through some of the most disadvantaged communities in the city. It is therefore important that the development and implementation of individual projects addresses social and health inequality issues in these communities, where appropriate and feasible.

³ Norwich City Council Corporate Plan 2015-20: Refresh 2017-18

Map 2: Deprivation map based on Indices of Multiple Deprivation data

