



River Waveney Trust Strategic Plan 2020 -2023



Introduction

Set up in 2012, the River Waveney Trust (RWT) is an environmental charity dedicated to improving and protecting the River Waveney, its tributaries and catchment, making it a better place for people and wildlife.

The River Waveney is a lowland river in the East of England, forming the boundary between Norfolk and Suffolk. The tidal reaches form part of the Broads National Park, reaching the sea at Breydon Water in Great Yarmouth. The upper reaches are slow flowing and meandering, with a well-connected floodplain.

Proud to be part of the Rivers Trust movement, we are one of 60 local river trusts across the UK and Ireland.

We work in collaboration with a wide range of partners including government agencies and other organisations, individuals and local community groups with the aim of delivering a catchment based and integrated approach to managing the River Waveney and the surrounding land. Working in partnership is essential to enable us to deliver effective environmental projects in our river and its catchment.

Volunteers are essential to our work, they run the charity on a day to day basis and carry out practical conservation work in the catchment. We have four local groups who meet regularly and manage sites along the river for all to enjoy. We also work in close partnership with the Scole Nature Trails Trust.

Our strategy sets out in detail what we hope to achieve over the next 3 years in order to meet our mission as an organisation. We have set out five main objectives that will not only work towards our vision, but will also see the River Waveney Trust grow in strength as an effective organisation.

Achievements

As a volunteer-run organisation the River Waveney Trust has achieved a great deal since its formation in 2012. These are our most significant achievements:

- Forming and managing 4 'pocket park' reserves along the river.
- Supporting volunteer conservation groups at each pocket park.
- Managing a Wildlife and Study Centre for 4 years at the Otters Trust site.
- Building an outdoor classroom at the study centre, running a youth group (The Halcyons) and facilitating school and community visits.
- Support to Scole Pocket Park to grow into a separate successful organisation, the Scole Nature Trails Trust.
- Supporting the Riverfly Monitoring Initiative to run at 7 sites along the River Waveney, including volunteer training events.
- Restoration of the historical lock at Geldeston, working with the Waterways Restoration Group.
- Environmental projects include:
 - Riparian tree planting.
 - Invasive species control projects.
 - Wet meadow management.
 - Eel pass installation
- Access projects include:
 - Paddle access work on the main river.
 - Footpath creation in RWT pocket parks.
 - Support to the Ramblers Association projects.
 - Improvements to fishing 'staithe's'.





Our Vision

is that the river's waters, catchment and habitats are healthy and valued for wildlife and people.

We will achieve this by building the capacity of our organisation to work both independently and in partnership with others to deliver projects that conserve, enhance and educate.

Our vision is aligned with the 25 year goal of our umbrella organisation, The Rivers Trust: *for rivers to be fit to swim in, with abundance of fish and wildlife, that are valued by society in their natural state.*

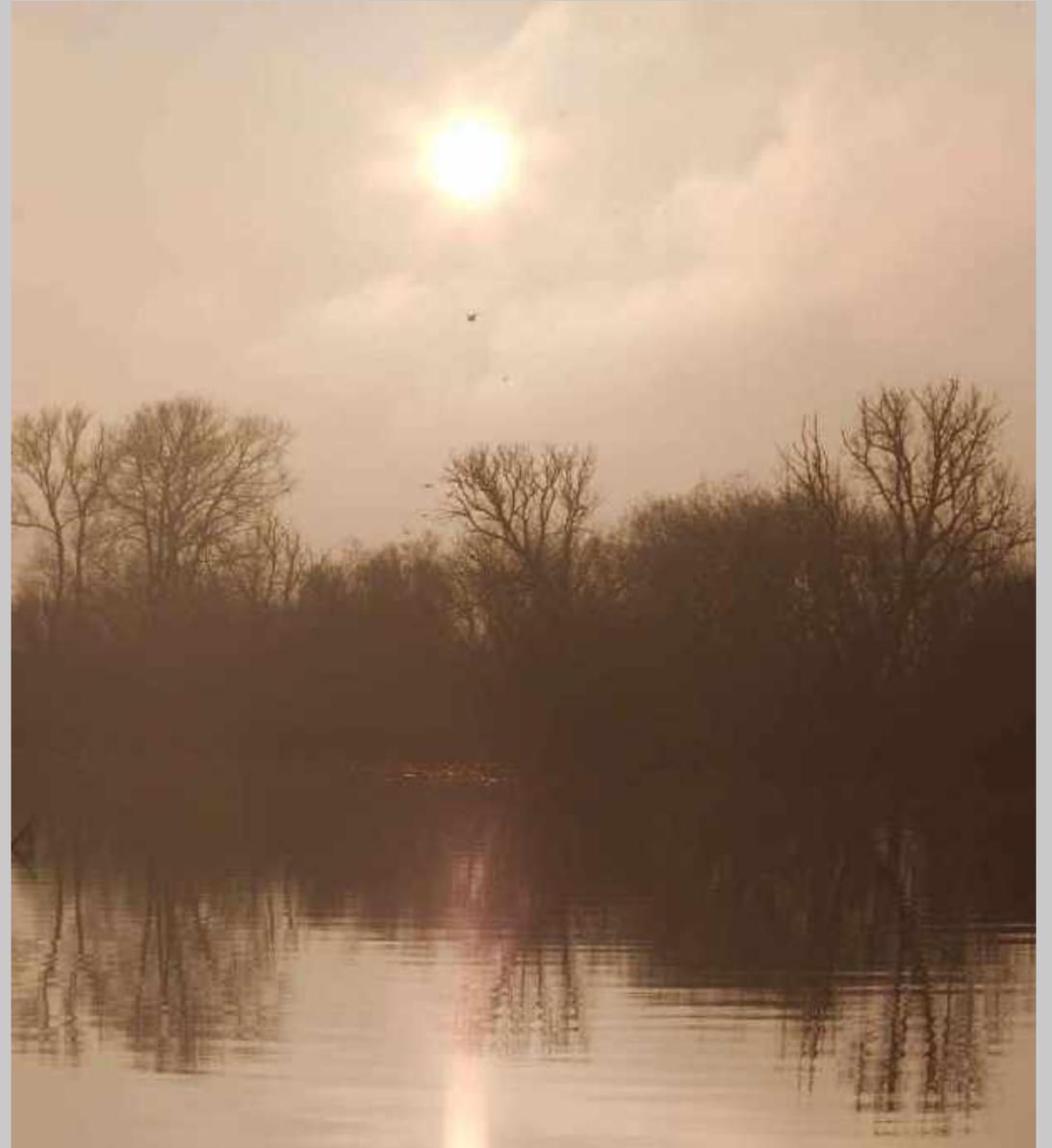


Our Mission

Is to promote, protect and enhance the health of the river and its catchment for wildlife and people

In order to work towards achieving our mission we have two overarching **strategic themes** or **values** for the River Waveney Trust over the next three years:

1. We will consider the whole catchment in the work that we do.
2. We will keep the long term future of the River Waveney Trust at the forefront of what we do.



Our Objectives

In the period from 2020 – 2023 we have identified five main objectives.

These objectives include project work, but also concentrate on growing the charity so that in three year's time we will be in a stronger and more sustainable position.

1. To identify and deliver a range of projects that reduce pollution and enhance habitats on the River Waveney, its tributaries and within its catchment.
2. To maintain and increase access to the River Waveney for the benefit of the public, including provision for anglers and paddle navigation, whilst ensuring the restoration of habitat for wildlife.
3. To improve the local profile and brand of the River Waveney Trust, building on the reputation of the national Rivers Trust movement.
4. To invest in building the capacity of our team of trustees, coordinators and key volunteers to best support our work.
5. To ensure the development of the River Waveney Trust as a sustainable and effective organisation.



Environmental and organisational benchmarks

At the end of the 3 year strategic period the success of our work will be measured against the following benchmarks:

1. There has been an increase in water quality/decrease in pollution within the Waveney catchment.
2. There has been an increase in good riparian and wetland associated habitat within the Waveney catchment.
3. There has been an increase in the connectivity of good riparian and wetland associated habitat within the Waveney catchment.
4. Riparian associated access has been increased for the public.
5. The profile and brand of the RWT and its work has been raised, enhancing commitment to the local environment and benefitting people's health and wellbeing.
6. The team involved in the running of the RWT has been adequately supported, resourced and trained to carry out work as identified.
7. The RWT is financially sound, organisationally robust and adequately staffed to be an effective conservation organisation.



Objective 1 – To identify and deliver a range of projects that reduce pollution and enhance habitats on the River Waveney, its tributaries and within its catchment

The River Waveney is a lowland river, flowing through a predominately arable landscape. It suffers from the typical issues affecting this kind of river. These include over enrichment; chemical pollution; excess sediment; low flows; habitat loss/degradation; invasive non-native species and over modification of the channel. It is also impacted by the need for abstraction and flood defence. These issues negatively impact on habitats and wildlife, so we aim to identify and deliver projects which will work towards reducing these pressures.



Key Tasks	Outcomes	3 Year Benchmark
To assess current RWT managed sites for habitat enhancement opportunities and implement resulting projects.	Wildlife habitat is enhanced at RWT managed sites.	There is an increase in water quality/decrease in pollution within the catchment.
To identify and deliver environmental projects with the support of the Technical Advisory Board.	Wildlife habitat is enhanced, created and connected and water quality is improved.	There is an increase in good riparian and wetland associated habitat within the catchment.
To continue using the Riverfly initiative to monitor river health and support identification of project sites.	River health continues to be monitored and this helps to target work to have the greatest impact.	There is an increase in the connectivity of good riparian and wetland associated habitat within the catchment.
To create new working partnerships with relevant organisations.	Partnerships are successful in achieving sound environmental outcomes and future working relationships are formed.	The RWT is financially sound, organisationally robust and adequately staffed to be an effective conservation organisation.
Key Performance Indicators		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Size/number of habitats created/restored/enhanced/connected. • Number of successful projects carried out to reduce pollution/improve water quality. 		

Objective 2 – To maintain and increase access to the River Waveney for the benefit of the public, including provision for anglers and paddle navigation, whilst ensuring the restoration of habitat for wildlife

The River Waveney is a green corridor not just for wildlife, but also for people, both locals and visitors to the area. It provides a place of tranquillity, leisure and employment to many. To ensure the public continues to enjoy, value and care for the river, access must be provided for all users where appropriate. Anglers and paddlers are some of the most committed river users, so to target these groups will help ensure strong partnerships going forwards. The projects will be carefully managed to ensure minimum disturbance or damage to wildlife and habitats. Raising awareness, creating exclusion zones and controlling access will all play a part.



Key Tasks	Outcomes	3 Year Benchmark
To assess and survey the river to decide on which stretch to maintain for paddle navigation and implement resulting projects.	An identified stretch of river is maintained for paddle navigation and partnerships are created with local canoe clubs.	Riparian associated access has been increased for the public.
To identify opportunities for new public paddle access and portage points and implement resulting projects.	New paddle access and portage points are created.	The profile and brand of the RWT and its work has been raised, enhancing commitment to the local environment and benefitting people's health and wellbeing.
To identify opportunities to increase public access on foot and implement resulting projects.	New public access points for walking are created and partnerships formed with local communities.	
To audit and maintain existing RWT managed sites where public access is already granted.	Public access is maintained at RWT managed sites.	
Key Performance Indicators		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Length of river maintained for public access. • Number of access projects completed (paddle, foot and angling). 		

Objective 3 – To improve the local profile and brand of the River Waveney Trust, building on the reputation of the national Rivers Trust movement

The RWT has been an active organisation in the area since 2012 and manages a number of sites along the river as well as holding some small events. In recent years, although the local volunteer groups are still very active, the public presence is not as high and more could be done to improve the local profile and brand. Alongside an updated media profile, the RWT aims to be much more active in local outreach work to increase the reach of the organisation within the catchment.



Key Tasks	Outcomes	3 Year Benchmark
Complete the new RWT website and ensure regular updates for followers on the website, Twitter and Facebook.	The RWT becomes more visible online and reaches a greater audience.	<p>The profile and brand of the RWT and its work has been raised enhancing commitment to the local environment and benefitting people's health and wellbeing.</p> <p>The RWT is financially sound, organisationally robust and adequately staffed to be an effective conservation organisation.</p>
To proactively seek opportunities to feature in the local media.	The work of the RWT is championed locally.	
To ensure signage at RWT managed sites is adequate.	Site users are aware that RWT are conservation site managers.	
To ensure that key staff and volunteers have RWT branded clothing.	RWT staff/volunteers are recognised for the work they are doing.	
To review RWTs 'members' package.	Current members continue to be engaged with the RWT and revenue is generated.	
To set up a corporate membership package.	Local businesses are engaged and revenue is generated.	
To hold at least one talk and one event annually.	There are opportunities for the public to engage face to face with the RWT and profile is raised.	
To proactively engage with additional communities, land managers, schools and partners.	The work and profile of the RWT are raised and new partnerships are formed for the future.	

Key Performance Indicators

- Number of media mentions (news feeds/papers, local tv, radio, magazines).
- Number of web engagements (website traffic, Facebook followers, Twitter followers).
- Number of communities, land managers, schools and partners engaged with.
- Amount of revenue generated from members and corporate members.

Objective 4 – To invest in building the capacity of our team of trustees, coordinators and key volunteers to best support our work

The River Waveney Trust is currently a volunteer-run organisation. The team of trustees, coordinators and key volunteers consist of highly committed individuals, many of whom give up hours and days of their time freely to the RWT. In order to build the capacity of the team, support needs to be given in the form of adequate volunteer staffing, technical support, training, meetings and events. Decisions will also need to be made concerning the employment of staff as project work increases.



Key Tasks	Outcomes	3 Year Benchmark
To identify and complete training for the team as needed.	The team is able to carry out work as identified.	<p>The team involved in the running of the RWT has been adequately supported, resourced and trained to carry out work as identified.</p> <p>The RWT is financially sound, organisationally robust and adequately staffed to be an effective conservation organisation.</p>
To set up a technical (environmental) advisory board to assess and advise on environmental projects.	RWT is supported to make decisions on projects which will have the best environmental impact.	
To set up a management advisory board for strategic advice.	RWT is supported to make the best strategic choices possible for the future of the RWT.	
To recruit at least four new trustees.	Skill gaps within the board are resolved, strengthening the future direction of the RWT as an effective organisation.	
To ensure all coordinator positions are filled with an active volunteer.	All local groups are active and able to carry out work in their area.	
To hold a volunteer event for all RWT volunteers.	Volunteers are retained and supported in their roles.	
Key Performance Indicators		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of active volunteer roles filled. • Number of volunteers and volunteer days. 		

Objective 5 – To ensure the development of the River Waveney Trust as a sustainable and effective organisation.

As a volunteer-run organisation that has had a small turnover the RWT has achieved a huge amount since its formation. Recently, as the RWT has received more significant funding, decisions will have to be made on how to move forwards. This will include addressing funding, staffing, reporting, H&S and policies. Decisions should ensure that the RWT becomes more effective in the long term as a local environmental organisation.



Key Tasks	Outcomes	3 Year Benchmark
To employ or contract staff to take forward identified projects.	Identified projects are successful in achieving environmental outcomes and staff raise the profile of the RWT.	The RWT is financially sound, organisationally robust and adequately staffed to be an effective conservation organisation.
To set up a reporting and contacts database as needed.	Successes and contacts are recorded for efficient and effective future work.	
To adopt relevant policies as needed and ensure all Health and Safety paperwork is up to date.	The RWT has a robust set of guidelines, ensuring transparency and safety within the organisation.	
To identify sources of unrestricted funding which will support running costs.	The RWT is financially sound and able to run efficiently.	
To produce an annual report.	Successes are shared raising profile and increasing funding potential.	
To identify matched or project funding to ensure continuity after the three year strategic period.	Environmental work of RWT is not disrupted due to lack of funds.	
Key Performance Indicators		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Income/turnover generated. Number of staff hours worked. 		



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