

River Bann Enhancement Group
Action Plan 2009-2010



FOREWORD

The River Bann shaped Portadown for centuries as transportation and trade led to the town becoming an important industrial centre during the 19th century.

As its commercial importance diminished, the recreation value of the river increased.

Today however water quality and environmental problems have led to a decline in its use and the criticism is levelled that Portadown has turned its back on the Bann.

The Action Group therefore propose a series of actions to redress the years of neglect so that the River Bann once again becomes an important resource for the entire community.

This is the third Annual Action Plan and seeks to build on the momentum achieved in the previous two years.

I would particularly wish to extend a warm invitation to any citizens of the Borough or interested persons who wish to join the *Friends of the Bann*. This inclusive community body was established to facilitate positive contributions from all members of society. Your input would be very welcome.



Mr Brian Cassells
Chairman
River Bann Action Group



Bann Regatta

Achievements to date

- Weedcutter procured by Craigavon Borough Council with £25,000 grant matchfunding from Department for Culture, Arts and Leisure, and £15,000 grant from the Ulster Wildlife Trust
- Aquatic weed management programme Year One completed
- Two annual events programmes including art, social and sporting themes
- Security review undertaken and being implemented by the Police Service of Northern Ireland
- Graffiti removal project completed by Development Department, Craigavon Borough Council
- Water quality monitoring updated regularly and presented annually
- Signage review undertaken and new signage erected
- New public furniture installed along the Bann Boulevard
- River dredging priorities programme agreed with Rivers' Agency
- Friends of the Bann group constituted
- Broad based Action Group partnership created and meeting quarterly
- Weekly Council maintenance programme along the town stretch throughout the year
- Two series of River Bann primary schools education programmes delivered by Leisure Services, Craigavon Borough Council
- Access to the Bann Boulevard enhanced with the reopening of The Meadows Shopping Centre gate
- Active membership of the Inland Waterways Association of Ireland seeking the appropriate designation of the Upper Bann



Introduction

The Action Plan sets out to direct the Group's activities and provide a focus for other key stakeholders.

Portadown's River Bann frontage extends from Portadown Rowing Club to Hoy's Meadow, a distance of around 1000 metres.

Some initiatives extend beyond this general boundary and are included within the Action Plan reflecting either an operational reality and/or their strategic significance.

Individual initiatives within the Action Plan are not mutually exclusive but integrate effectively to create a cohesive regeneration plan for this critical town section of the River Bann.

Craigavon Borough Council will lead the partnership initiative facilitated by Portadown 2000 and supported by the Department of Social Development. The Group will also seek to both engage and network with other key river regeneration agencies and interests who have the experience, expertise and resources to assist in delivering the Action Plan.

Rationale

The Action Plan 2009-10 provides direction for the Group reflecting both its short and long term aspirations.

The focus on delivering short term 'wins' continues sustaining early momentum and encouraging local engagement while planning for long term infrastructure investment.

The Action Plan 2009-10 is informed by the Craigavon Area Plan 2010, the Portadown Development Framework and the River Bann appraisal carried out by Scott Wilson Planning Consultants in 2006.

The Vision

'The Portadown stretch of the River Bann will be an inviting, safe and inclusive riverside location providing wide public appeal through a broad range of appropriate recreational and leisure activities. The high quality natural amenity value of the area will be protected and sensitively enhanced.'



Bann Boulevard

ACTION PLAN 2009-10 PROPOSALS

	PROGRAMME	INITIATIVE	MEASURABLE	ACHIEVABLE
1	River Bann Clean – Up Programme	-Remove graffiti -Remove flyposting -Remove debris -Remove non-aquatic weeds from key public areas -Environmental improvements	Weekly maintenance clean-up regime reports	PSNI cadet initiative CBC, Portadown 2000, Friends of the Bann, Rivers' Agency
2	Renew and refurbish river signage	Review signage requirements	New requirements to be erected.	CBC
3	Integrated Events Programme	Calendar of events created maintaining the momentum of socially inclusive activity throughout the year.	A. Website calendar maintained on www.portadowntown.com B. Performance indicators completed for each event including: Upper Bann Regatta Moneypenny's lock keeper's house reopening Marie Curie cycle event 'Friends' fishing competition Country Comes To Town	CBC, Portadown2000, Friends of the Bann & partners
4	"Friends of the River Bann" community interest group	Group established and constituted	Action Plan agreed and implemented	CBC, Portadown 2000
5	Aquatic Weed Management	- Undertake weed management along the town stretch. - Dredging project at Point of Whitecoat	Second year programme delivered	CBC, DCAL, Rivers' Agency
6	Promote the Upper Bann as a high quality navigable waterway	-Network programme with other regeneration bodies -Refurbishment of Moneypenny's landing stage	Maintain corporate membership of the <i>Inland Waterways Association of Ireland</i> . - Undertake networking opportunities - Boat and canoe access created to Moneypenny's Lock	CBC, DCAL, ENTRUST, Portadown 2000
7	Statutory designation of the Upper Bann	Lobby through the partnership structure for the appropriate designation of the Upper Bann	Progress and current priorities to be reviewed in March 2010	CBC, Lough Neagh Advisory Group, Portadown 2000



PROGRAMME	INITIATIVE	MEASURABLE	ACHIEVABLE	
8	Review River Bann area Council Bye-Laws relating to anti-social behaviour & enhancing amenity value	Review process led by Council supported by partners	Review completed and recommendations, if any, forwarded for Council's consideration by December 2009	CBC, PSNI
9	Short term proposals for each primary river use.	Proposals requested from all local clubs or interest groups including: rowing, fishing, boating, cycling, and walking	Proposals prepared, monitored, supported and progressed in partnership with each interest group	CBC and Portadown 2000 overview with partners
10	Reviewed/Enhanced disability access	Disability access audit conducted and actioned	Prioritise actions	Disability Amblers Northern Ireland
11	Enhanced river frontage at The Meadows Shopping Centre	Agree and implement an alternative frontage project	Project to be completed	CBC, Portadown 2000, Meadows Shopping Centre
12	Day tourism initiative	Promote the River Bann within Council's broader tourism strategy	River Bann initiatives included	CBC Tourism
13	Safety & Security	PSNI and partners input into an appropriate security assessment	Assessment agreed. Implementation Commenced	PSNI, CBC, Portadown 2000, & partners
14	Water Quality Monitoring Programme	Consult with statutory bodies on current monitoring regime	Regular water quality monitoring. Annual update report	CBC, NIEA, NI Water
15	River Bann Environmental Education programme	Delivery of appropriate education programmes	Seasonal programme	CBC Leisure Services



Objectives

There are 12 objectives which collectively provide the integrated strategic framework from which the Action Plan is constructing:

- 1) To promote appropriate water and land based recreational and leisure pursuits.
- 2) To integrate an enhanced, high quality river frontage within Portadown town centre.
- 3) To establish partnership working as the principle delivery mechanism in achieving the appropriate regeneration of the River Bann.
- 4) To create accessible, inclusive open space which will be engaged and enjoyed by everyone.
- 5) To encourage sustainable, appropriate multi-functional land use along the entire river stretch which respects the natural environment and enhances the character of the area.
- 6) To achieve private sector investment at a ratio of 5:1 to public sector expenditure on future appropriate development.
- 7) To create an attractive environment and welcoming ambience free from crime and the fear of crime.
- 8) To complement and also drive retail and day visit tourism thereby enhancing the Portadown 'offer' to all visitors.
- 9) To require quality urban design, materials and workmanship of the highest European Standards.
- 10) To further enhance Portadown's strategic location by promoting relevant integrated transport opportunities.
- 11) To promote local employment and economic development opportunities for the immediate area.
- 12) Maximise possible funding from external sources.



Rowing on the Bann

Strategy

- 1) The Group will encourage and persuade the public sector to seek to pump prime the Action Plan 2009-10 and seek match funding from both public sector agencies and private sector interests.
- 2) The Group will seek to sustain momentum in delivering the Action Plan through a combination of 'quick wins' and delivering strategic projects.
- 3) The broader regeneration of the Portadown River Bann section is phased over a 10 year period. The short term objectives are currently being delivered over the first 36 months including the Action Plan 2009-10.
- 4) Craigavon Borough Council and Portadown 2000 will drive the Action Plan forward with the support of key public sector agencies and stakeholders. This partnership ethos will also seek to encourage wider public engagement through appropriate channels and opportunities.

The Way Forward

The Action Plan 2009-10 steers a clear way forward in delivering the comprehensive and appropriate regeneration of the Bann riverside at Portadown over a ten year period.

Driving the programme and maintaining momentum are the key roles of the River Bann Action Group which is the appropriate implementation vehicle to progress this phase of the regeneration process.

This Action Plan provides a framework by which to achieve this crucial momentum. The principle delivery mechanism is through 'inclusive meaningful partnership' between the public, private and voluntary sectors.

Long term development and infrastructural proposals for the Bann are also being generated and will be published when appropriate.

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FRIENDS OF THE RIVER BANN