

# **Programme Development report**

# Executive Summary

This Programme Development Report examines the content of the Lagan Valley Regional Park Landscape Partnership Scheme. Each of the 6 schemes comprising the Landscape Partnership Scheme is detailed in terms of the deliverables, costs and timeframe.

This report is linked with the Access and Audience Development Plan and the Training Plan which aim to identify who the target audience is and what training requirements will be needed to successfully delivery the various projects detailed within this report.

The report examines the 6 schemes comprising the LPS:

- Interpretation Development
- Species Survey & Conservation
- Habitat Management & Enhancement
- Volunteer & Community Participation
- Built Heritage
- Urban Improvements

A range of projects are being delivered under each of these schemes. This report aims to identify the scope of each of these projects, ensuring that sufficient resources have been allocated to ensure a successful delivery.

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## 1.0 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this programme development report is to outline the content of the schemes and projects contained in the Lagan Valley Regional Park Landscape Partnership Strategy. Key partners of the Regional Park have committed themselves to carrying out work as part of this Landscape Partnership Scheme. All of the programme elements have been identified through a comprehensive consultation process with the various landowners and partners who have a statutory responsibility for particular aspects of management within the Regional Park. In addition a range of voluntary organisations, schools, residential associations and community groups have been involved.

The Lagan Valley Regional Park Landscape Partnership Scheme is comprised of 6 individual schemes:

- Interpretation Development (Section 2.0)
- Species Survey & Conservation (Section 3.0)
- Habitat Management & Enhancement (Section 4.0)
- Volunteer & Community Participation (Section 5.0)
- Built Heritage (Section 6.0)
- Urban Improvements (Section 7.0)

Sections 2.0 -7.0 outline the specific projects being delivered during the course of the Landscape Partnership Scheme, detailing the deliverables, timing and cost implications. An overview is provided at the end of each individual section which outlines the costs, audience the project is being targeted at and the reference to the operational plan as presented in the 5 year Management Plan (Appendix G).

Section 8 provides details of the costs for the entire scheme, while section 9 outlines the programme of work for Year 1.

This Programme Development Report should be read in connection with the following reports which comprise Lagan Valley Regional Park's application to the Heritage Lottery Fund for financial support in the delivery of its Landscape Partnership Scheme:

- Landscape Strategy
- Access and Audience Development Plan
- Training Plan
- Appendices A-Z

## **1.1. Establishment of LVRP Ltd**

KMPG were commissioned by the Environment & Heritage Service to produce a business case for the Lagan Valley Regional Park. A series of options were presented during this review which was considered by Lagan Valley Regional Park Management Group and Advisory Committee.

A decision was made to restructure the existing Lagan Valley Regional Park into a Company Limited by guarantee. It was expected that this company would be established and be in a position to sign the Landscape Partnership Scheme application. Unfortunately the approval from Council's and other government bodies took longer than anticipated.

However, at a recent Advisory Committee meeting (October 25<sup>th</sup>) approval was given to the establishing the Company limited by Guarantee. It is expected that this will be completed by the end of December 2006. The review undertaken by KMPG and Bearing point has allowed for the provision of a new administrator and Director which will complement the existing staffing in the Park. Details on the staffing structure are examined in the Landscape Strategy report, Section 1.4.

Third party agreements are required for a number of the projects, as detailed in sections 2.0 - 7.0. The existing Advisory committee will be dissolved prior to the establishment of the new Company limited by guarantee being formed. As a result any 3<sup>rd</sup> party agreements designed now would have no legal standing.

It has been agreed that the appointed solicitor who will establish the company will also assist in preparing third party agreements.

## 2.0 INTERPRETATION DEVELOPMENT

The aim of this scheme is to increase the public's awareness of the natural and built heritage throughout the LVRP. The Interpretation Development Scheme aims to provide comprehensive interpretative material throughout the Regional Park, which provides a range of information for visitors to the Regional Park and also promotes the Regional Park. It aims to provide this information in a format that maximises the audience which can utilise it, which has been identified within the Access and Audience Development Plan.

The 6 programmes being delivered under this scheme are:

- Signage
- Promotional material
- Eco-trail development
- Sensory information
- Interpretation within the Lock Keeper's Cottage
- Website

### 2.1 Signage

In 2005 an Interpretation Strategy was prepared for the Regional Park (Ferguson Mc Ilveen in association with Judith A Annett – Countryside Consultancy). This interpretation strategy identified many of the signage needs within and surrounding Lagan Valley Regional Park. A high number of signs were suggested within the Strategy. In order to provide sufficient information to Park users, without overloading the Regional Park with signs, a decision was made to combine signs where possible ( e.g. where a Weir and bridge are present, one sign will identify them both, rather than 2 separate signs as suggested).

The following sections examine the range of signs that will be adopted throughout the Regional Park over the course of the Landscape Partnership Scheme.

The range of signs identified within the signage programme includes:

- Approach Signs
- Arrival & Welcome signs
- Large Interpretation sign
- Small interpretation signs
- Directional signs
- Name signs
- Village signs

### 2.1.1 Approach Signs

Approach signs advise travellers that they are close to the Regional Park and confirm the direction of travel. For vehicle drivers and passengers, brown tourist road signs need to be located at key junctions near to the park.

Within the Interpretation Strategy a total of 10 sites, with 11 signs were identified. These sites are:

		<b>Nearest Car Park</b>
1	Belfast City Centre (x2)	
2	Stranmillis Roundabout	Lockview
3	Saintfield Road / Annadale Avenue junction	Annadale Embarkment
4	Malone Road / Bladon Drive junction	Lagan Meadows
5	House of Sport Roundabout	Shaws Bridge
6	Newtownbreda dual carriageway / Belvoir Milltown junction	Belvoir Park Forest
7	Finaghy Road South / Upper Malone Road junction	Sir Thomas & Lady Dixon / Drumbridge
8	Hillhall Road/ Drumbeg Road junction	Drumbridge
9	Lisburn City Centre	Lagan Valley Island
10	Sprucefield Roundabout	Union Bridge

Section 7.5 of the 5 Year Management Plan (2007 -2011) (Appendix G) identifies the need to raise awareness of the Regional Park and identifies the provision of approach signs as one means of achieving this. Section 2.1.8 details the costs involved in the provision of these signs.

In addition, directional fingerpost signs will be located at identified bus and rail stations located in close proximity to the Regional Park.

Within the Access and Audience Development Plan it is observed that only 1% of the users surveyed reach the Regional Park using public transport. This signage in combination with the provision of a Recreation & Access leaflet aims to improve the linkages between public transport stops and access into the Regional Park.

### 2.1.2 Arrival & Welcome signs

The purpose of these signs is to let the visitor know that they have arrived within the Regional Park and to advise the name of the specific locality.

25 of these signs were identified within the Interpretation Strategy. Lagan Valley Regional Park will be erecting these signs from the 2006 / 2007 budget and their provision will not be included within the Landscape Partnership Scheme application.

### **2.1.3 Large Interpretative Signs**

Large interpretative signs are required at main entry points and at key sites requiring visitor information. Each sign will have a diagrammatic map of the park with information on access. Common to these signs will be a short introduction to the Regional Park. Specific site information will come under the three headings of natural history, heritage and recreation. 6 key sites have been identified as requiring these signs, as follows:

- Minnowburn
- Union Locks
- Lock Keeper's Cottage
- Hilden
- Millbrook
- Ballyskeagh

The specifications of these signs are detailed in the Interpretation Strategy, 2005.

### **2.1.4 Small Interpretative Signs**

These will be located at second tier destinations and attractions. The content of these signs may be quite specific, for example to a particular recreational activity. The content will include built and natural heritage topics.

It is proposed to position these at 6 locations within the Regional Park, the locations of which need to be agreed and will be determined from their content.

### **2.1.5 Directional Signs**

Directional signs advise or confirm the direction of travel. Some may relate to themed trails. The Interpretation Strategy proposed installing 11 mile markers with 10 decision signs. In order to limit the number of signs positioned throughout the park, it is now proposed to combine directional and distance information on the one sign / post.

Direction signs will also indicate destinations and facilities, e.g. toilets off main pedestrian routes and particularly off the towpath. A total of 11 directional signs will be installed throughout the Regional Park.



- 10 additional key historical features

These name signs are small and similar in shape and size to a number plate. Specifications are presented in the 2005 Interpretation Strategy.

### **2.1.7 Village Signs**

There are a number of villages within the Regional Park. The village signs which will be erected will name the settlement with the addition of the Regional Park branding and logo and Council crest. The following villages have been identified within Lagan Valley Regional Park as requiring such signage:

- Edenderry
- Drumbeg
- Ballyskeagh
- Lambeg
- Hilden

Details on the costs of these are presented in Section 2.1.8.



## **2.2 Promotional Materials**

Within the Interpretation Strategy there was a need identified for the provision of promotional materials. A day long workshop was held in June 2006, which specifically discussed the provision of interpretation within the Regional Park. Approximately 20 organisations were invited and attendees discussed the range of topics, format of interpretation, content and distribution of this information within and surrounding the regional Park. Suggestions from this workshop and consultation undertaken during the development phase has resulted in the following 3 projects being identified.

The Landscape Partnership Scheme aims to provide promotional information in 3 formats:

- Leaflet
- Booklet
- Maps

### **2.2.1 Leaflets**

In May 2005 a Countryside Recreational Strategy was completed for Lagan Valley Regional Park. Within this Strategy there was a clear need identified to promote the recreational facilities currently available within the Regional Park.

Within the Access and Audience Development Plan there was a recognised need to promote access routes, both to and within the Regional Park. It is proposed to combine both these recommendations onto one leaflet entitled 'Recreational opportunities & Access'.

The double-sided leaflet will be A2 in size which folds to A5 which conforms with the existing range of leaflets produced by Lagan Valley Regional Park. The leaflet will present information on the recreational opportunities within the Regional Park, providing contact details for those organisations that deliver recreation. It is also anticipated that the leaflet will provide details on how to access the park using public transport. This may be in the format of a map.

A provision to provide for an additional leaflet within the 5 year period is also included but the content of this has yet to be realised.

### **2.2.2 Booklet**

A significant volume of material was collected during the preparation of the Landscape Partnership Scheme application and development phase. Much of this information will be utilised in the generation of leaflets, signage, and interpretative panels. However, given the high volume of information it is proposed to generate a 'Booklet' for Lagan Valley Regional Park, which will examine the following aspects:

- History
- Geology
- Historical features within the Regional Park
- Facilities within the Regional Park
- Wildlife
- Recreational opportunities
- Important contacts
- Ways to get involved

The booklet will be A5 in size and less than 100 pages. Quotes have been requested from a range of suppliers to print a booklet based on the comparable format (i.e. paper quality, estimated number of colour pages, black & white, size, quantity etc.) and an average has been calculated for these costs as presented in Section 2.2.4. We anticipate producing 10,000 copies. A provision has been allowed for a graphic designer to be involved in the preparation of the front cover and some additional pages.

### **2.2.3 Maps**

No detailed maps of Lagan Valley Regional Park are currently available. This is obviously limiting to users of the Regional Park, who would like to explore the Regional Park.

It is proposed to create a large detailed map which will serve several functions including:

- Promoting the profile of the Regional Park,
- Providing sufficient detail to users to explore throughout the Regional Park,
- Provide reference within the Educational Resource pack (section 5.1.3)
- Facilitate the future production of orienteering maps

Contact has been made with the Ordnance Survey Northern Ireland, who is presently preparing their business plans for the forthcoming year. It has not yet been decided if Lagan Valley Regional Park will be included within their business plans and discussions are on-going. The linearity of the Regional Park lends itself to being depicted on 3 separate 1:50,000, Ordnance Survey maps. Anyone wishing to explore the entire Regional Park would require all three maps, which is very costly and prohibitive. For this reason it is hoped that a single map detailing the entire Regional Park would be formed.

It is hoped that this map would allow for smaller detailed maps to be easily created for users throughout the Regional Park to enjoy activities such as walking, orienteering etc. A provision for 2 smaller maps has been allowed for.



## **2.3 Ecotrail development**

An Ecotrail will be developed in Castle Gardens. The lead partner in this project is Countryside Access and Activities Network (CAAN).

The Eco-trail will provide an opportunity for young people to engage with their surrounding environment with the trail being linked with the sport of orienteering. The 1998 Countryside Strategy identified the need to encourage young people, to develop their knowledge and appreciation of the Countryside by encouraging them to participate in countryside activities.

Each Eco-trail involves a marked trail using standard orienteering style marker posts accompanied by an orienteering style map. Each eco-trail is supported by a detailed activity booklet, containing a range of environmental activities based on the natural and built environment.

Costing for the provision of an eco-trail is provided in Section 2.3.1. This scheme will be completed in Year 1 of Stage 2.



## **2.4 Sensory Information**

Sensory information is overarching and is a consideration that needs to be borne in mind when providing any Interpretation material.

Within the sensory information programme 5 projects will be developed, which include:

- Audio loop in the Lock Keepers Cottage
- Information provision
- Language
- Collection of historical stories
- Heritage Audio Trail

### **2.4.1 Audio loop in the Lock Keepers Cottage**

Entrance into the cottage will trigger a soundtrack. This will be carefully researched and scripted but will likely include noises of preparation in the kitchen, children talking or arguing in an upstairs bedroom. There will perhaps be the sound of a dog barking outside with the sounds of raising or lowering the lock gates accompanied by that of the sound of water rushing from one level to another. The soundtrack will be relatively short and will just let those present, hear what a small household where 10 children were brought up would have sounded like.

During the development phase, partners expressed a desire that the cottage should largely focus on the life of the cottage and its inhabitants. A user survey undertaken during the heritage open day as discussed in the Access and Audience Development Plan agreed with this proposal.

It is therefore felt that a limited number of small explanatory plaques could be complemented by the use of audiotapes, which could be triggered by a number of different push buttons at key locations within the Cottage. Those using the facility could press a button to hear a short (20/30 seconds) overview of various aspects of life in the Cottage (possibly spoken by Mrs McBride).

It is intended to complement this short snippet of information with a booklet / publication of short stories featuring details of what life was like in the area during the active Lock network. Details of this are provided in Section 2.2.2. This small booklet will be linked with the Heritage Audio trail are detailed in Section 2.4.4.

## 2.4.2 Information provision

This project refers to the provision of information in a format that does not exclude any of the target audiences identified in the Access & Audience Development Plan. In consultation with the Royal National Institute for the Blind, we identified that one of the limiting considerations for people with visual impairments is the provision of information in a format that is tailored for them. With this in mind the following medium for information delivery were examined:

- CD or Daisy<sup>1</sup> audio
- Large Font
- Braille

Daisy stands for “Digital Accessible Information System”. A Daisy book is a digital talking book, structured in such a way to allow the reader to move around the book as someone would use a print book. It offers a worldwide standard for reading and producing published materials. It can be used in a variety of ways which includes on a computer, using Daisy software, or playing discs on a Daisy player or on other small portable devices.

In order to ensure that Lagan Valley Regional Park provides for the entire target audience as identified in the Access and Audience Development Plan, the following will be provided for during the Landscape Partnership Scheme:

Development of 1 booklet in audio (DAISY compatible)

Provision of 2 leaflets in large font

Provision of selected signage which will include tactile Braille.

Lagan Valley Regional Park anticipates creating 2 separate leaflets during the course of the Landscape Partnership Scheme. The first will address the issues of recreation and access within the Regional Park (see Section 2.2.0). It is anticipated that an additional leaflet will also be developed during the Landscape Partnership Scheme. A provision to provide both of these leaflets in large font has been detailed in Section 2.4.6.

Provision of signage has been examined in Section 2.1. The additional costs for including tactile Braille on these signs has been provided for within this programme, while the costs detailed in Section 2.1.8 only account for the provision of signs with normal lettering.

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<sup>1</sup> Digital Accessible Information System

### **2.4.3 Language**

All promotional material (signs, leaflets, website etc) currently generated by Lagan Valley Regional Park is presented in English only. This precludes anyone who does not have English as their first language.

Lagan Valley Regional Park intends to create 2 leaflets (Recreational & Access and Towpath) in 2 other languages. This will be developed through student placements as detailed in Section 5.1.4.

A provision of the print costs of these leaflets is detailed in Section 2.4.6.

### **Collection of Historical folklore**

During the development phase a collection of historical folklore within Lagan Valley Regional Park was undertaken. The volume of work required to complete this task was initially underestimated, with a result of information only being obtained between the Stranmillis and Shaw's Bridge areas. This represents the North Eastern section of the Regional Park, which has a steep history.

A total of twelve stories have been tape recorded, transcribed and checked with the interviewee (11 of these are presented in Appendix J, one more is currently being completed). These mainly cover the area around Lock View Road, the district known as The Village. Here, at the start of the canal, there used to be a surprising range of industries including a soup works, an engineering works, a roofing felt factory (Vulcanite) and two brick works.

Fortunately some people interviewed still had a clear memory of these industries and the operation of the canal. Memories of the second lock and the Belvoir Park Estate have been recorded. It was particularly important to gain as much information as possible about the third lock, where the interpretation centre will be located, and a long interview was undertaken with Mrs McBride, who was born in this building. Information was also recorded about the former Newforge factory, about Barnett Estate (now Barnett Park) and a brief interview was undertaken about Wilmont Estate (now Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park) during the War.

A range of photographs were obtained from local residents, of local scenes, factories, the canal and local people. In addition the Hogg and Welch Collections (Ulster Museum) were briefly examined and copies of photographs were obtained of the area.

Some research has been undertaken into the factories in the Stranmillis/Newforge area.

During Stage 2, the collection of industrial folklore will continue to include for the area between Shaw's Bridge and Union Lock. This will ensure that information being provided through leaflets, interpretation panels, Lagan Valley Regional Park's website and within the Interpretation Centre will detail information on the entire park.

It is anticipated that this will be completed in Year 1 to ensure that the provision of interpretation material is not biased on the information collected solely during the development phase. The areas from which additional stories will be collected include:

- Edenderry
- Purdysburn
- Drumbridge
- Giant's Ring

Forest of Belfast has agreed to complete the additional works at a cost of £3,000. This includes the costs of copying old photographs of the area and purchasing a small number of other relevant images relevant to the area (e.g. posters, postcards)

### **Heritage Audio Trail**

Consideration was given to the possibility of supplying an audio guided tour, beginning from the Visitors Centre and guiding visitors through designated routes (through for example Belvoir Forest, the Meadows, or along the tow path). Experience with this technology suggested, however, that the geography is not ideally compatible with this being a successful option.

Costing for hand held units together with the production of scripted, professionally presented narrative would prove expensive and were only popular and successful when used in a secured route. That is to say wherever the tour begins, it should also end. Units are then monitored quite easily, handed back at the end of the trip thereby reducing the chance of theft. It was considered that the unit cost of these hand-held units in excess of £400.00 makes this option unfeasible.

With the advance of technology and the popularity of MP3 players, it is proposed to have a download facility within the Visitors centre, where narratives of local stories could be downloaded. These stories would be based on information collated during the development phase and early part of Stage 2, primarily those stories recorded by Ben Simon (Forest of Belfast) and the findings of the industrial heritage audit.

Consideration has also been given to having this facility available through the Lagan Valley Regional Park's website. Costs have been provided for the professional recording of stories as presented in Appendix J, development of route markers and a downloadable station within the new visitors centre. These costs are provisional at this stage and may need to be reviewed during the course of the project.



## **2.5 Interpretation within Lock Keeper's Cottage**

Once developed, the site will feature a fully restored Lock Keeper's Cottage and a neighbouring Visitor's Centre, offering full time office accommodation for Landscape Partnership Scheme/Lagan Valley Regional Park staff, a seasonal tea/coffee facility and a partially landscaped picnic/relaxation area.

Despite restrictions in the opening hours of the Cottage and the potential seasonality of the tea/coffee facilities, it is hoped to maximise every potential opportunity for interpretation and education on the site. Details on the restoration of the Lock Keeper's Cottage are presented in Section 6.0. This section only details the interpretation elements of the project.

### **2.5.1 Exterior Signage**

In order to encourage the passer-by into the centre it is proposed to create a series of information points and signs surrounding the cottage and visitors centre to entice visitors in.

It is proposed to erect a sign, inside the picket fence to the right hand side of the proposed new gate. Double upright posts, secured to a concrete base below the (wheelchair-friendly) compacted gravel would support the sign, designed to a height easily read by able-bodied and wheel-chair users alike.

All signage will adopt the Lagan Valley Regional Park's style. The signage in this area will clearly provide for the logos of the key partners involved in the project, namely, Heritage Lottery Fund, Castlereagh Borough Council, Department of Culture Arts & Leisure and LVRP.

This sign will convey information about the Cottage such as when it was built; the need for occupancy to cater for the extensive traffic on the river; when it was last occupied etc. It will also provide opening times and a contact number for those wishing to secure more information and/or to arrange access/viewings/guided tours etc.

A Directional Sign, positioned in the gravel between the far end of the Cottage and the lawn will also identify the existence of the Visitor's Centre, office accommodation, tea room and toilets along the pathway.

A Wall Mounted Sign, positioned on the sliding door of the main building will identify the Centre.

A further (matching) sign will then be required beside the restored Lock No.3 in keeping with the Lagan Valley Regional Park Interpretative Strategy, which identified the need for all locks to be interpreted and numbered. This sign will form one in a series of lock signs that explains the navigation system and where the particular lock lies, as explored in Section 2.1.6.

### **2.5.2 Visual Interpretation/Fixtures and Fittings**

The intention is to restore the cottage back to its former glory, with assistance from Mrs Dorothy McBride (one of the ten Kilpatrick children born and raised in the Cottage, whilst their father acted as its last Lock Keeper).

It is envisaged that an atmosphere will be created for visitors in a way to convey what life was like for those who actually lived there. The cottage will be 'dressed' in a similar manner to cottages at the Ulster Folk Museum (though with furniture items secured for security purposes).

The main living area and downstairs bedroom will be restored, as they would have been when Mrs McBride was a child. Unfortunately, the Cottage is small and because of H&S issues there will be no facility to allow visitors to go upstairs. Castlereagh Borough Council has therefore asked its architects to design the Cottage with a partial mezzanine floor, covering the master bedroom and accessed in theory (but not in practice) by an exact replica of the former ladder/staircase. In this way, those entering the Cottage will be able to view the children's bedroom area and to get a sense of what the sleeping accommodation would have been like for the ten Kilpatrick children. Drawings of the planned restoration of the Lock Keeper's Cottage are presented in Appendix W.

### **2.5.3 Interpretation within the Visitors Centre**

To support the cottage a new visitor's centre will be built in close proximity, which will provide for additional interpretation, tea and coffee facilities, toilets, and office space. The surrounding gardens will be landscaped to provide an easily accessed picnic / relaxation area. It is expected that the provision of the new interpretation centre will strengthen the level of interest and attendance at the Lock Keepers Cottage. This section examines the interpretation materials that will be used within the new building. Drawings of the new interpretation centre are presented in Appendix W.

The left hand side wall immediately inside the entrance of the Visitor's Centre, together with the end wall to the Tea Room on the right hand side, allows for approximately thirteen running metres of display material.

It is intended to mount six large panels on this natural stone wall that would convey a comprehensive story of the entire LVRP corridor from Lisburn to Stranmillis, the overall Lagan navigation and a summarised mention of the Lock Keeper's Cottage. Much of this data has been collated by Forest of Belfast as mentioned in Section 2.4.4 and presented in Appendix J.

The lead partner of this project, Castlereagh Borough Council is keen to locate a working model of the lock in the central hallway of the Visitor's Centre. It is expected that a three dimensional representation of the Lock Structure would help convey the workability of a lock and would thus encourage repeat visits.

The Council recognises that sound in this area would also be worth exploration, although care and consideration for staff would have to be taken into account as a day-long soundtrack, audible to all within the small space, would very quickly begin to grate on the nerves of those exposed for long periods of time.

To offset this concern it is proposed that scripted stories (such as those sourced by Ben Simon), could be incorporated into the exhibition and listened to on headphones designed as integral parts of the display, with actor's voices complemented by the sound effects of the river and birdlife.



## Website Development

The existing Lagan Valley Regional Park Website is not very user friendly and is not readily recognised by search engines.

The following sections will be incorporated into the new website:

- Homepage
- Map & Directions
- Volunteering opportunities
- History of the Regional Park
- Events
- Landscape Partnership Scheme
- Nature
- Getting Involved
- Recording Sheets
- Seasons in the Park
- Park Management
- Educational resource pack
- Contact Us
- Links

The anticipated costs of developing the LVRP website includes for the launch and hosting of the website by a suitable service provider. Training will need to be provided to staff in a suitable web publishing format e.g. FrontPage. Details on training needs are detailed in the Training Plan.

The launch of the new website will be achieved during Year 1. Preliminary investigations have been undertaken to provide for a voice browser on Lagan Valley Regional Park's website. This will ensure inclusion of a wider audience. It is intended to develop much of the website in house, but specialised advice will be required to incorporate a voice browser. It is important to ensure that the website complies with the DDA legislation and guidelines.


### 3.0 SPECIES SURVEY AND CONSERVATION

#### Objective:

This scheme specifically targets the recording and management of species that are located throughout the Regional Park and aims at improving the understanding of those species.

The 5 programmes being delivered under this scheme are:

- Red squirrel conservation
- Otter conservation
- Recording of Badger locations
- Bat conservation
- Bird conservation

#### 3.1 Red squirrel conservation group

The objective of the red squirrel conservation group is to determine the number of red squirrels within Lagan Valley Regional Park, promote awareness of the threats facing the species, and strive to ensure its continued presence within Lagan Valley Regional Park.

##### 3.1.1 Red squirrel distribution records

During the development phase Lagan Valley Regional Park staff estimated the geographical distribution of the red and grey squirrels which are present in the Park. The Regional Park was divided into 5 sections as follows:

- Section 1 Lockview car park to Shaw's Bridge
- Section 2 Shaw's Bridge to Drumbeg
- Section 3 Drumbeg to Hilden
- Section 4 Hilden to Lagan Valley Island
- Section 5 Lagan Valley Island to Union Locks

Between January and June 2006, recordings were made in each of these areas of sightings of red and grey squirrels. This provided an indication of the range of the distribution of both species.

Section	Red Squirrel numbers	Grey squirrel numbers
1	46	39
2	0	15
3	0	6
4	1	2
5	0	0

RSPB were involved in a highly detailed survey of the bird life throughout the regional park from December 2006 to July 2007. RSPB staff noted sightings of squirrels while they undertook their own surveys. This data was also fed into the records.

The information collated is merely an indication of the distribution range of the 2 species. One of the aims of the Red squirrel conservation group is to identify the existing numbers of red squirrels within the Regional Park and also to gauge public perceptions on the issues facing the future of the red squirrel.

In order to calculate the existing numbers of red squirrels, transect surveys will need to be undertaken. This will involve selecting areas throughout the Regional Park and undertaking slow linear walks recording signs of red squirrels. A methodology sheet and recording sheet is presented in Appendix L. These will be used by existing LVRP staff, LPS staff and members of the public. They will be made available via the website and the campaign will be promoted through Lagan Valley Regional Park's Newsletter. Distribution points for the survey and recording sheets will include Council offices and the Lock Keeper's Cottage development.

### **3.1.2 Red squirrel conservation group**

A meeting of the red squirrel conservation group was held in February 2006 with subsequent smaller select meetings in June, July and August. Representatives from over 9 organisations were in attendance. Details on the specifics of this project will be agreed with the red squirrel conservation group during the early part of Year 1. Consultation has been ongoing with similar schemes in the UK such as Dundee City Council and Ayrshire Red Squirrel Group.

A major element of red squirrel conservation programme is raising the awareness of the threats and issues facing the future of the red squirrel. In order to achieve this, we propose to undertake a media campaign which will involve on-going surveys to gauge public perception, leaflets and educational panels at selected sites. The practical conservation measures to be adopted will be decided by the Red squirrel conservation group. These decisions will make reference to local biodiversity action plans and practices undertaken by other similar groups throughout Northern Ireland, Ireland and the UK.

Consideration was originally given to the provision of red squirrel supplementary feeders (feeding boxes designed to prevent grey squirrels entering). A recent decision by the Northern Ireland Squirrel Forum to oppose the use of supplementary feeders due to the potential of spreading disease requires this project element to be reviewed.

A provision of £30,300 has been allocated to the development of this project. Costings include for:

- development of a media campaign,
- literature,
- squirrel ropes to aid the red squirrels to cross busy roads safely,

Details on the distribution of the money will be decided by the Red squirrel conservation group.

### **3.2 Otter Conservation**

Lagan Valley Regional Park is a recognised important habitat for otters. Given the species elusive nature, sightings are not commonplace but are regularly reported to the Park staff. In order to raise the profile of this species and encourage its continued presence in the River Lagan it is proposed to develop artificial holts in various areas along the river. These holts will provide secure resting points and breeding places along the river where there is a lack of natural cover.

Consultation has been undertaken with Durham wildlife trust, local biodiversity officers and the Ulster wildlife trust in terms of the general concepts of this project, which has received support. We intend to develop these holts at pre-selected sites along the river commencing in Year 3. Detailed surveys will first need to be undertaken to ensure that the siting of the holts complements the current distribution of otters within the River Lagan.



It is expected that this will prove an ideal project for volunteers to manage and develop.

In order to undertake surveys, staff and volunteers will require training in small mammal identification, which is currently provided by the Field Services Council, Derrygonnelly.

Otter surveys are best undertaken from a boat, rather than the bank itself as this creates the biggest opportunity to identify spraints and other markings left by the otters. A provision to purchase kayaks has been allowed as detailed in Section 3.5.

Section 5.5.1 outlines the 'Getting involved initiative' which aims to encourage members of the public to report wildlife sightings. A recording sheet, specifically for otters will be prepared and provided for through this project.

### **3.3 Recording of Badger locations**

Badgers are an important species within Lagan Valley Regional Park. Information on the location of badger setts and clan sizes is not readily known. It is important to understand the location of these setts in terms of habitat management practices, potential conflict with future development and to actively manage for this species.

Recording of sett locations and estimates of badger numbers will allow Lagan Valley Regional Park to make informed decisions. Collation of this information will ensure that habitat management and conservation practices for other species as noted in Section 3.0 and 4.0 are not achieved through to the detriment of badgers or their habitats. Information on the locations of badger setts will be strictly controlled with all information being password protected. A provision for training has been created along with the supply 2 pairs of night vision goggles which will allow staff to undertake surveys.

Advice and any required permissions will be sought from regulatory authorities prior to the commencement of any activities involving badger or their setts. It is unlikely that this project would allow for the involvement of members of the public. Badger baiting is an ongoing problem in Northern Ireland and the Regional Park has an obligation to protect any information it holds on badgers.

### **3.4 Bat conservation**

Bat walks are a regular event within Lagan Valley Regional Park, where the specialist advice of the Northern Ireland Bat Group is provided. One limiting factor on these well attended events is the provision of suitable equipment for those attending to fully appreciate the nature of the various bat species located throughout the Park.

It is proposed to work with the NI Bat group in promoting bat species and adopting suitable conservation techniques to encourage their continued presence. This includes the provision of bat boxes, which will be erected throughout the regional Park, based on advice from the Bat group.

Consultation has been undertaken in determining the most suitable and functional way in which members of the public can become better informed and educated in this specialised area. Two levels of bat detectors have been suggested which would meet this need – bat duet detectors and Micro-bat detectors.

It is hoped that a small group of bat enthusiasts would be formed who would actively assist with the development of this project. Erection of bat boxes will be done with the advice of all relevant organisations.

During year 1 and 2 it is expected that the detectors are utilised to gain a greater understanding of the distribution of bats throughout the Park, while the erection of bat boxes and any other suitable conservation measures would be undertaken in Years 3, 4, & 5.

### 3.5 Bird conservation

During the development phase RSPB conducted a comprehensive programme of bird surveys throughout the entire Regional Park. A copy of the survey report is presented in Appendix I. From this survey work a greater understanding of the bird species present in Lagan Valley Regional Park was determined. The surveys commenced in November 2005 and were completed by July 2006. The purpose of the survey was to establish the abundance and distribution of bird species throughout Lagan Valley Regional Park.

Recommendations from the survey and consultation with the RSPB have identified 10 species which would benefit from a range of conservation measures. The 10 species identified include:

Spotted flycatcher	House Sparrow
Barn owl	Reed Bunting
Seed eating birds	Song Thrush & other thrush
Kingfisher	Starling
Dipper	Swifts

Many of the conservation techniques to be employed include for the following:

- Provision of nest boxes
- Creation of fen habitat for Reed bunting
- Creation of 'Giant bird' table

It is hoped that much of this conservation work will be delivered through a range of volunteer projects including the development of the Volunteer ranger service. A provision has been allowed for specialised bird advice to be provided throughout the Landscape Partnership Scheme. Through this we hope to adopt best practice and ensure the successful implementation of these conservation measures.

This work is to be provided through the volunteer scheme with the RSPB providing an advisory capacity in relation to the sizes of nest boxes, locations and delivery of any associated training.

Nest boxes will be supplied through the Young Offenders Centre, Hydebank. The following table outlines the projects that will be implemented for the 10 species.

Many of the suggested projects complement projects being delivered in other Programmes, which includes.

- Provision of nest boxes for Kingfisher which will be developed with reference to the 'Name our Kingfisher' competition' and the role Lagan Valley Regional Park has to play in promoting Biodiversity.
- Supply of nest boxes from the Young Offenders Centre, Hydebank complements community involvement,
- Improved interpretation of species found within Lagan Valley Regional Park
- Wildlife recording
- Volunteer Rangers

### 3.5.1 Bird conservation project details

SPECIES	PROJECT	DETAILS
<b>Spotted flycatcher</b>		
LVRP represents a fantastic opportunity to conserve this declining red-listed species.	Nest box erection, creation of suitable perches, and creation of insect rich areas	<p>Sourcing/building open fronted boxes.</p> <p>Correctly identifying suitable areas of good breeding habitat with good structural vegetation.</p> <p>Erecting the boxes and suitably concealing them.</p> <p>Creation of suitable perches.</p> <p>Creation of insect rich areas through wildflower/flower beds or at edge of open areas.</p> <p>Additional planting to ensure well-structured vegetation structure from ground to tree canopy.</p>
<b>Barn owl</b>		
This declining species has been sighted in the LVRP and the park may hold several pairs.	Nest box erection, habitat and food provision	<p>Sourcing/building specialised barn owl boxes.</p> <p>Correctly identifying the most suitable locations.</p> <p>Erecting the next boxes.</p> <p>Creation of rough grass habitat through management of certain areas or margins, ie. Golf course 'rough'</p> <p>Improvement/restoration of old barns to make nesting and roosting possible.</p> <p>Grain dumps in old barns to encourage rodents and an easy meal for barn owls.</p>
<b>Seed-eating birds</b>		
A number of seed eating species were recorded in the LVRP, some more abundant than others. This group would benefit from extra seed resources in the winter.	The creation seed-rich areas in the park for seed-eating birds	<p>Management changes to allow areas of long grass to exist at 'edges' and in certain sections. Grasses should be allowed to set-seed to provide a seed source.</p> <p>Negotiation with landowners to obtain permission for the siting of a 'giant bird table'.</p> <p>Preparation and sowing of the 'giant bird table' on an (bi) annual basis.</p>

SPECIES	PROJECT	DETAILS
<b>Dipper</b>		
A characteristic bird of the Lagan. Affected by loss of nest sites	Dipper nest box creation	Sourcing/building of specialised open-fronted dipper nest boxes. Correctly identifying suitable areas of good breeding habitat. Erecting the boxes under bridges and similar structures and suitably concealing them.
<b>Kingfisher</b>		
The flagship species of the Lagan Valley Regional Park. Affected by loss of nest sites	Kingfisher nest box creation.	Sourcing/building of specialised tunnel nest boxes. Correctly identifying suitable areas of good breeding habitat in areas of low disturbance. Position the boxes in the bank during the non-breeding season. Monitor usage and ensure the locations are kept confidential
<b>House sparrow</b>		
Although quite a common species in some areas, recent declines across NI and UK highlight that conservation action is needed	Creation of a house sparrow colony through nest box erection and the creation of seed and insect rich areas.	Sourcing/building nest boxes. Creating loose colonies of erected nest boxes in suitable areas. Creation of a winter seed resource – planting of a weed/grain seed resource, i.e. giant bird table Creation of summer insect rich areas – long grass, wild flowers, flower areas.
<b>Reed bunting</b>		
Fewer than expected reed buntings were found in LVRP so perhaps more suitable habitat management is required.	To create additional habitat for the reed bunting	Identify suitable areas of the best habitat for reed buntings. Restore and create more reed and fen habitat at the side of the river and any surrounding wet lands.

SPECIES	PROJECTS	DETAILS
<b>Song thrush / other thrushes</b>		
Many excellent sites exist in the LVRP for the thrush family, with the mix of parkland, playing field and golf course.	To create additional habitat for this species through management advice and changes in practice	<p>Provision of advice through visitation or advisory sheets.</p> <p>Creation of mixture of long grass at margins, close to cover, combined with short grass areas.</p> <p>Maintenance of damp ponds or wet areas or soft ground, especially in dry breeding seasons.</p> <p>Creation of wet mud areas especially during breeding times for nest construction.</p> <p>Maintenance of leaf litter and foraging areas.</p>
<b>Starling</b>		
A common bird in Northern Ireland but declining in other parts of the UK	Creation of a starling colony	<p>Sourcing/building nest boxes.</p> <p>Creating a colony of erected nest boxes in suitable areas.</p> <p>Potential project - collaboration with QUB for research project looking at why Northern Ireland starlings are doing well here and not in other parts of the UK.</p>
<b>Swifts</b>		
Commonly associated with more urban parts of Belfast and Lisburn but feeds across LVRP.	Creation of swift nesting opportunities	<p>Identify any existing houses and buildings where swift are nesting and ensure access is preserved.</p> <p>On suitable buildings, the erection of suitable swift nest boxes can be erected.</p> <p>On any new builds or restoration of old buildings, incorporate a swift tiles, swift boxes or allow access to a potential nesting site in the roof area.</p>




#### 4.0 HABITAT MANAGEMENT AND ENHANCEMENT

**Objective:** To carry out active management of grassland and wetland habitats within LVRP. This work will aim to prevent the loss or degradation of the identified habitats. Where possible the wildlife value of habitats will be improved through positive management.

The 3 programmes being delivered under this scheme are:

Grassland management

Wetland management

Ancient Acorn project

#### Grassland Management & Conservation

The objective of the grassland management and conservation programme is to manage existing grassland sites which have been noted as having high biodiversity value.

In 1996, a grassland survey was undertaken within the Regional Park, where a total of 71 sites were surveyed. Within the 1996 survey detailed descriptions of site vegetation were provided and where appropriate management recommendations and action plan comments were detailed.

During the development phase, W M Associates were contracted to undertake surveys of grassland sites throughout the Regional Park. All 71 sites surveyed in 1996 were revisited and evaluated for their existing biodiversity importance. From these 71 sites a select list of 29 sites were selected as displaying characteristics worthy of grassland conservation. The sites as noted below occurred throughout the Regional Park, with both private and public owners.

Site ref.	Appendix ref.	Site name	Ownership
1	T1	WOODLAND PARK, OLD WARREN	Public
5	T2	HOGG'S WEIR AT OLD WARREN	Public
6	T3	HOGG'S LANE	Public
11	T4	HILDEN WEIR	Public
12	T5	GLENMORE ACTIVITY CENTRE	Public
13	T6	GLENMORE	Public
14	T7	GLENMORE HOUSE	
25	T8	SLOPE BELOW DISTILLERY STADIUM	Public
26	T9	SEYMOUR HILL	Public
30	T10	THE GLENS	Private
31	T11	MOTORWAY PLOTS	Both

37	T12	SIR THOMAS AND LADY DIXON PARK	Public
40	T13	MALONE GOLF CLUB	Corporate
41	T14	EEL WEIR ISLAND	Corporate
42	T15	EDENDERRY NATURE RESERVE	Public
45	T16	EDENDERRY, NEW GROVE	Public
47	T17	BARNETT DEMESNE	Public
48	T18	EDENDERRY SLOPES	Private
49	T19	MINNOWBURN	Public
54	T20	GIANT'S RING	Public
55	T21	CLEMENT WILSON PARK	Public
59	T22	LAGAN MEADOWS	Public
63	T23	MEADOWS TOWPATH	Public
64	T24	MORELAND'S MEADOW	Public
65	T25	BELVOIR PARK FRONT	Public
66	T26	BELVOIR PARK FOREST	Public
68	T27	SHARMAN ROAD	Public
70	T28	GALWALLY GRASSLAND	Both
71	T29	ANNADALE EMBANKMENT	Public

Each landowner was contacted and provided with a 'Site Managers Guide to Objectives & Methods' as presented in Appendix S. This guide provides details on the objectives of the proposed management plans and outlines three phases to individual site management practices:

- Site preparation phase
- Establishment phase
- Aftercare – 5 year plan

For each of these 29 sites, site specific draft management plans were prepared as presented in Appendix T. These draft site management plans were distributed to the respective landowners for consideration. On-going consultation is taking place with the respective landowners to determine how many of the recommendations, if any, will be adopted on their individual sites.

The available resources and commitment from each landowner varies considerably. The reports presented in Appendices S and T, are in draft format as they need to be accepted and agreed by each individual landowner. This is a lengthy process and is as yet incomplete. Some landowners have contacted the Development Officer to express concerns on some of the suggestions (i.e. introduction of non-native species) within the reports. It is expected that

all decisions regarding grassland conservation practices will be decided and agreed by the end of December 2006.

When this has been achieved, a copy of the reviewed Site manager guide to Objectives and methods' along with the site specific plans will be made available to the Heritage Lottery Fund. It is likely than an extension to the involvement of an botanist is required to closely liaise with landowners in addressing their concerns.

### **Wetland**

During the development phase 2 wetland sites were considered for inclusion in this programme. Site meetings were held by site owners and the Rivers Agency to assess some of the practicalities involved in developing the individual sites, one located in Sir Thomas & Lady Dixon Park and another in Lagan Meadows.

It was decided that the Lagan Meadows site requires a hydrological site investigation to ensure that any works undertaken does not jeopardise the existing habitat. This has yet to be undertaken.

The site at Sir Thomas and Lady Dixon Park will be developed in Partnership with the River's Agency and Belfast City Council.

### **Ancient Tree Project**

There are 2 facets to this project, the first element relates to the development of large sites where trees will be planted, which will be coordinated through Forest of Belfast and a volunteer programme. The second element relates to the provision of free trees to landowners within the Lagan Valley Regional Park, or to householders who have large gardens.

Conservation Volunteers Northern Ireland has been growing approximately 18,000 acorns which were collected from Belvoir Park Forest by Forest of Belfast. Acorn production varies dramatically from year to year, a phenomenon known as "mast-fruiting" or "masting". High acorn productions occur every 4 to 10 years, which may result in years where there are little or no acorns produced. It is important to consider this when planting acorns and the intention is to increase planting in years of low acorn production.

It is proposed that the trees will be planted at a small number of large sites (events organised by Forest of Belfast) by the Lagan Valley Regional staff and voluntary groups. Exact locations of sites has yet to be determined. Forest of Belfast has been in consultation with the Woodland Trust and Northern Ireland Housing Executive to acquire an area of land close to Belvoir Park Forest.

Conservation Volunteers Northern Ireland has agreed to vary the forms in which the collected acorns are grown. This will include root trainers and the greenhouse, which will provide whips at different periods during the course of the Landscape Partnership Scheme.

As noted one element of this project is the provision of free trees to landowners within the Regional Park. A secured area will be created which will temporarily house trees which can be collected, by prior arrangement by members of the public.

An area will be created, composed of a sand bed created with railway sleepers. This area will temporarily store 2-3 year old oak whips. Information will be provided on planting techniques and tree aftercare. Tree tubes and spiral guards will be supplied with each tree to ensure that they are protected from lawn mowing operations etc.



#### **4.4 VOLUNTEER AND COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION**

One of the main aims of the Landscape Partnership Scheme is to provide opportunities for people to become involved in activities throughout the Regional Park. Consultation has taken place with various community groups and organisations, including:

- Drumbeg Residents Association
- Grassroots
- Volunteer Service Lisburn
- Belvoir Park Primary School
- Belvoir Housing Association
- RSPB
- Royal National Institute for the Blind
- Quercus – Northern Ireland’s Centre for Biodiversity and Conservation Biology
- Northern Ireland Housing Executive

Through this consultation and as a result of works undertaken during the development phase a series of initiatives are planned for Lagan Valley Regional Park, which are detailed in Sections 5.1 – 5.10.

The 9 programmes being delivered under this scheme are:

- Conservation focussed volunteer projects
- Educational Resource Pack
- Student Placements
- Drumbeg village projects
- ‘Getting involved’ initiative
- LVRP Newsletter
- Photo competition
- Art Campaign
- Name our Kingfisher

#### **5.1 Conservation projects**

Conservation projects are being delivered by two key organisations, Volunteer Service Lisburn and Grassroots. Both of these organisations aim to provide opportunities for volunteers to get actively involved within the Regional Park.

### **5.1.1 Volunteer Service Lisburn**

Voluntary Services Lisburn (VSL) has 20 years of experience in the management of volunteers over a wide range of projects. VSL values the involvement of volunteers in their work as they help reflect the interests, needs and resources of the community they aim to serve and bring a unique perspective on all their work.

VSL provides regular practical opportunities, day-long projects especially useful for those people who are perhaps unemployed, retired, or have free time from college or work. Some of the groups may carry out projects on a small number of sites as part of their long term management; whereas others are more likely to take part in short term projects in a variety of different locations.

Specific details of how to volunteer will be clearly identified through our website, promoted through Volunteer Centres, Lagan Valley Regional Park Annual Events Programme, Lagan Corridor Programme and Events, Lisburn Forum (with our 50 member groups), City Wide Promotion, Business in the Community, NICVA, Education and Library Board, Schools, Colleges, through the three local councils and the press.

The range of projects being delivered through VSL will include:

- Wetland management.
- Hedgerow creation and management.
- Grassland survey and management.
- A sustained programme of woodland planting.
- Habitat management and enhancements.
- Access Work - step, stile, path and gate construction.
- Maintain and repair structures.
- Erect temporary fencing.

### 5.1.2 Sites & project details - VSL

#### **GIANTS RING** (Length 1500 metres)

The prehistoric Giants Ring in the town land of Ballynahatty lies only five miles from Lisburn and four miles from the centre of Belfast. Today it dominates the Lagan Valley Regional Park from its isolated sandy plateau caught in a loop of the River Lagan. It is still immensely impressive, consisting of a sub-circular enclosure, defined by a high grass-covered bank with a top of flattened by generations of Sunday walkers. It was probably built at the end of the Neolithic or the beginning of the Bronze Age around an earlier Neolithic passage grave. Most of the grave's massive stones are still in position, though one of the roofing slabs has slipped and the original covering mound has been removed.

Work is required to maintain the Public field path which involves cutting back vegetation to maintain public access to a traditional field path leading to Edenderry village.


#### **THE UNION LOCKS** (Length 400mts x 2 mts)

The Union Locks were constructed over 230 years ago as part of the Belfast to Lough Neagh Navigation System and remain a site of considerable industrial archaeological interest. The site was clearly central to the canal company operations incorporating the managers' house, a lock house, repair sheds and stables most of which are still there today. The Union Locks comprised the only multiple lock system on the canal, forming an impressive flight of four locks divided into two sections by a pond to allow boats to pass. They were constructed to lift the canal 26 feet 4 inches from the River Lagan to the summit level of the canal system within a distance of less than 100 yards, it is here that the canal formally parted company with the river. The horse-bridge which carried the horses across the river was removed in 1958 and replaced by a new bridge in 2002 to provide access from the towpath to the wildlife site improving recreational opportunities for local people and long distances walkers it also an important part of the National Cycle Route.

Work Required – Annual maintenance including strim site, path clearance and tree planting. In year 2 the four locks and passing chamber will be cleared of all trees and vegetation. This will require the hiring of scaffolding in year 2 for 12 weeks.


**DERRIAGHY GLEN** (Length 1050 mts x 2 mts)

Derriaghy Glen formed part of the Marquess of Hereford's estate with the Derriaghy river flowing under the main Belfast to Lisburn road into the lake and then was divided into two mill races (which can be seen today) to work the factory water wheels. The main river continued down the Glen until it reached the River Lagan near Mossvale. The Glen has well maintained paths of wild flowers winding thorough luxuriant trees, creepers and bamboo jungle areas with an a abundance and it is also an important area for red squirrels. The public access to the area could be enhanced by improvements to existing routes and access points into the glen from adjacent urban areas.

Work Required: Annual maintenance of public paths. Remove invasive species and plant 200 of seeded oak and beech whips per year.


**MILLBROOK RIVERSIDE PARK – HILDEN MILL** (Length 900 mts x 2 mts)

In the mid 19<sup>th</sup> Century the Lagan Valley was renowned for spinning, weaving, bleaching, dying, beetling and furnishing, everything connected to the manufacture of high quality linen. The River Lagan was a significant factor in the growth of the linen industry as it provided both a transport route and source of water needed for manufacturing. The recently sold historic Barbour Mill indicates the area's importance as a centre for linen production and offers a prime opportunity for the extension of the riverside paths from Millbrook through privately owned Hilden Mill back on to the towpath and though the Council lands at Glenmore. Millbrook / Huguenot is a residential area to the east of Lisburn City Centre. Although the overall landscape quality of this area is currently fairly poor, the river Valley at this point provides a natural link to the City centre.

Work required

Annual maintenance and grass cuttings (public access path to the Lagan Valley Regional Park) cutting back of invasive species.


**JUBILEE PARK** (Length 600 mts x 2 mts)

Jubilee Park is a 1.5 ha linear park located between Kingsway and the Glenburn Road in Dunmurry, a new play ground at the entrance has been provided by the developer of the old Lilliput laundry, a bridge over the Colin River links this development site to the park. Despite its small size and the fact that it is surrounded by built development this site provides a peaceful haven within an otherwise urban environment. The curricular path encompasses a tree lined wild flower meadow and the planting of daffodils provide a splash of colour in the spring. It is proposed that the re-routing of the Ulster Way will link Jubilee Park at the lower end though Fullerton Park playing fields to Glenburn Road across the Motorway bridge, on Dunmurry Lane to Lady Dixon Park and the Lagan tow path.

Work required: Complete resurface public access paths and replant the wild flower meadows and general maintenance.


SEYMOUR HILL (Length 100 mts x 2 mts)

Seymour Hill - a prominent urban fringe site with a wide view of the Lagan Valley, this site was formally part of an historic demesne, although all that remains today is a small area of parkland and woodland around Seymour Hill housed together with scattered groups of mature trees within the adjoining urban area. Oak Tree Walk - George's Lane is a public access path that joins the Woodland Trusts path to the Ramblers Bridge across the river Lagan and Canal to the tow path. Oak Tree Walk is a link to Derriaghly Glen that creates a network of public footpaths and a long distance route which is an important recreational activity.

Work Required. Maintaining public access - strim, scuff and cut back unwanted vegetation


**ABERDELGHY WOOD – BELLS LANE LAMBEG** (Length 1800 mts x 2mts)

The path alongside Aberdelghy golf course is a public access curricular route from the Lagan towpath at Lambeg, through ancient woodland, which was part of an historic demesne passing sensitive wildlife sites and wetland areas to Seymour Hill. This network of public footpaths is an important recreational facility which forms part of the Lisburn City Council 10k running trail.

Work required. Maintaining public access - strim, scuff and cut back unwanted vegetation.


**5.1.3 Overview of VSL led conservation projects**

#### 5.1.4 Grassroots

Grassroots will provide one task day per month for work in the Lagan Valley Regional Park. A calendar of works is prepared every six months. The following projects will be delivered in Year 1 of the Landscape Partnership Scheme.

##### **Tree Planting 2007 - Arboreal Amelioration of Hedgerow degradation**

Hedgerows are a rich source of biodiversity throughout the Regional Park, but have seen some degradation over the years. Hedgerow gaps will be filled by planting Hawthorn with occasional dog rose and Blackthorn.

Grassroots provide in house training to volunteers regarding tree planting, and provide tools. Two task days required sites are located along lagan meadows, Lagan Lands east, and towpath at union locks.



##### **Tree Planting 2007 - Conifer corridor initiative for Red Squirrel**

The Regional Park has several areas of habitat that are home to the Red Squirrel. This planting project is to plant favourable species along loosely defined corridors between habitats. This will require two days of tasks and the site will extend from Belvoir Park forest to the high ground in Lagan Meadows and from Belvoir to Minnowburn and Clement Wilson Park.



##### **Wetland work at Mooreland's meadow**

The pond that was created at Mooreland's meadow has seen some degree of natural succession over the past ten years. This project will be to restore an area of open water by cleaning out the pond. This will require two task days.


**Access work at Mooreland’s meadow**

Access to the wetland site is currently over two stiles that are having to be patched up to keep them in use. This project will replace both with new stiles. This will involve some repairs to associated fencing and will require three task days.


**Belvoir Graveyard project**

There is a landownership dilemma at the moment, nobody will claim ownership. The graveyard at Belvoir is part of our built heritage and is badly overgrown and will soon be completely lost to succession. The project will spend two task days cutting out the scrub and tree growth from the graveyard and clearing round some of the gravestones. There are Health & safety implications with this specific project for which a risk assessment will be undertaken prior to any works.


**Tree aftercare day**

This project will be focussed on visiting a number of sites where tree planting has been carried out in the past and clearing the vegetation around the trees and where appropriate replacing tree guards. This is to ensure a better survival of trees.


A provision has been given to allow for Grassroots’ involvement in Years 2-5, with a 10% increase for each subsequent year, as presented in Section 5.1.5.





## 5.2 Educational Resource pack

As a result of consultation with local schools it is proposed to provide an Educational Resource Pack for use by teachers in delivering the 'The world around us' aspect of the curriculum. It was suggested by teachers that provision of a CD, with detailed teachers notes, maps and worksheets would facilitate and encourage schools in proximity to the Lagan Valley Regional Park to engage with the facilities throughout the Regional Park.

The education system in Northern Ireland is centrally administered by the Department of Education and locally by 5 Education and Library Boards. The resource pack will cater for Key Stage 1 and 2 level students. The following table outlines the numbers of primary schools in each of the 5 Education and Library Boards.

School board	Estimate no of primary schools <sup>2</sup>
Belfast Education and Library Board:	105
North Eastern Education and Library Board	334
South Eastern Education and Library Board	168
Southern Education and Library Board	234
Western Education and Library Board	189
<b>Total</b>	<b>1030</b>

Initially, the education resource pack would be made available to all those primary schools in the Belfast education and South Eastern education and library boards. In addition an allowance has been made to include for the southern section of the North Eastern Education and Library board (Antrim area). A provision to supply 500 primary schools has been allowed for.

The resource pack would allow for teachers to utilise areas of the Regional Park as an outdoor classroom. The resource pack would cover topics, such as the following:

- Local history of the Regional Park
- Plant & Animals in the area
- Geology and how the area was formed
- Trees
- Historical features
- Norman settlements

The Resource Pack will be developed using FrontPage and will be distributed in a CD format to approximately 500 schools, targeting Key Stage 1 & 2 students. It would also be made

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<sup>2</sup> Includes controlled and maintained schools

available through the Lagan Valley Regional Park's website, which would facilitate updates and notification of specialised events.

A recent environmental education survey completed by Environment and Heritage Service and Queens University Belfast aimed to map the 'Provision of Environmental Education in Northern Ireland'. Lack of information was cited as one restriction that schools experienced in the delivery of environmental education.

The educational resource pack will serve as a front end to the planned delivery of field teaching within Lagan Valley Regional Park. It is intended that much of the intellectual property which forms the basis of the Education resource pack would facilitate delivery of practical field teaching. Lagan Valley Regional Park, in partnership with a number of organisations intends to submit an application to the Environment and Heritage Service to aid delivery of field teaching throughout the Regional Park. It is hoped that this will be completed by the middle of Year 2 of this programme. Consultation will be made with a variety of organisations including the Environmental Education Forum.

The education resource pack will be linked with the curriculum where possible and agreement has been secured from teachers in 2 schools to review the pack during its development. It is hoped that involvement of teachers and those involved in education delivery will correctly identify the level of content and scope of material within the resource pack.

The resource pack will be made available to all organisations within Lagan Valley Regional Park who are involved in education delivery. It is hoped to achieve a co-ordinated approach to the development of this resource pack, which would include as wide a range of organisations involved in the delivery of education as possible.

The table presented in Section 5.2.1 outlines the anticipated costs involved in the production of the Educational Resource Pack. An allowance has been made to provide some basic equipment for use by schools during any visits to the Regional Park. These are outlined in Section 5.2.1.



### 5.3 Student placements

The Career Service department in Queen's University Belfast operates a Work placement centre, which facilitate potential employers to advertise for student placements and volunteer opportunities.

Students from Queen's University Belfast review vacancies and apply for them detailing their educational background. It is envisaged that Lagan Valley Regional Park could utilise this facility to forge links with local University, providing projects which students could undertake during their placement.

Students would be offered a 10 week paid placement, most likely to take place during June, July and August. We expect that this facility would be developed in Years 2-5, with the focus of projects including conservation projects, surveys, media and promotions etc.

Costs for student placement are based on a 30 hour week. An increase of 10% year in hourly rates has been calculated to allow for inflation.



It is expected that projects will be identified for each year prior to student selection. Students will assume responsibility for a given project during their 10 week placement. It is expected that the focus of the projects will vary each year but they will link with the needs of Lagan Valley Regional Park at each given year.

### 5.4 Village Projects

These 'village projects' are designed to engage with the 5 villages within the Regional Park and to provide materials to the Residential Associations/ groups to enhance their communities.

It is intended that these projects will be flexible enough for the individual villages to tailor their projects to suit their local community. Obviously any materials supplied will complement the aims of the Landscape Partnership Scheme and where possible will be delivered using volunteers.

Drumbeg residents association have identified the need for additional tree and shrubbery to enhance their village. The aim of this project is to provide materials to create a series of small areas of trees and shrubs around the village of Drumbeg. It is proposed that this project will be made available to the 5 villages during the 5 year programme and an allocation of £2,000 per village has been allowed.



## **5.5 'Getting Involved' initiative**

Lagan Valley Regional Park recognises the need and importance to engage with the local community, volunteers, schools etc. We propose to facilitate this in 2 methods, firstly involving organised scheduled schemes and secondly providing a facility for ad hoc involvement which can be short term, sporadic and tailored to individual commitments.

The 'Getting Involved' initiative is comprised of 3 separate projects:

- Wildlife reporting
- Volunteer Ranger
- Specialised Guide

### **Wildlife reporting**

Wildlife recording aims to engage members of the community who regularly use the Regional Park. During the development phase a range of baseline surveys were undertaken and it is intended to maintain this information. One means of achieving this is to facilitate members of the public who regularly and periodically utilise the towpath or other areas of the Regional Park.

Recording sheets will be design to record wildlife sightings, e.g. otters, birds, fox, etc. This information will then be fed into the database, which will permit Lagan Valley Regional Park to make more informed decisions in its conservation capacity.

Species initially targeted will include the red squirrel, otters and the king fisher. Additional species including flora and fungi will be developed during the course of Year 1. It is anticipated that these sheets will be made available via the website and from through the Park office. In addition, details on how to access the recording sheets will be advertised through the newsletter.

It is hoped that this scheme will facilitate those users of the park who wish to engage with the management element on an ad hoc basis, rather than through the more formal arrangement of volunteer ranger or specialised guide.

### **Volunteer Ranger**

It is intended to create a opportunities for volunteer rangers to adopt responsibility throughout the Regional Park for a range of projects such as fence mending, hedge management, litter

picking etc. A third party agreement will be created between LVRP and the individual rangers to outline the symbiotic commitments. This agreement will outline the following commitments:

- Provision of appropriate training by the Regional Park
- Provision of tools and personal protective equipment for individual volunteers
- Mentoring of volunteer rangers by existing LVRP Rangers
- Volunteers to provide 14 days per annum within the Regional Park in lieu of training received

A range of courses have been identified as appropriate which are delivered by Conservation Volunteer Northern Ireland (CVNI). A list of appropriate training programmes is presented in Appendix P. A complete list of personal protective equipment and tools is presented along with costs in Appendix O.

CVNI provide a range of training courses, some of which are NVQ standard. It is proposed that existing LVRP rangers are assessed by CVNI to ensure that they provide mentoring to a level equivalent to NVQ standard. This would ensure that the volunteer rangers would be taught a standard on specific courses and then permitted to develop that knowledge on a continued practical basis. In order to achieve this it will be necessary to provide a budget for the existing LVRP rangers to attend any courses where NVQ standards are not displayed.

CVNI advise that it takes approximately 18 months for volunteers to complete an NVQ. Given this commitment we propose that all volunteers are initially provided with relevant training and that those that show commitment after 1 year involvement are provided with the option to enter into an NVQ training regime.

In return for this training, volunteer rangers will commit themselves to undertake 14 days of volunteering within the regional park during a 1 year period. In the event of training being provided, we feel it necessary to have an option to recover any costs for delivered training in the event of a volunteer not fulfilling their commitment. This would be at the discretion of the Management group and each individual case would be managed on its individual merit. Obviously in cases where volunteers are unable to complete their commitment due to ill health the management group would not propose to recover costs.

Through the Landscape Partnership Scheme we would aim to deliver 300 volunteer hours per year. This would be re-evaluated each year and amended according to the performance of the previous year.

We would anticipate 2 types of volunteer rangers – (1) casual ad hoc and (2) more permanent & regular. We propose to provide those individuals who illustrate ongoing commitment with

their own personal protective equipment, while we would supply the casual ad hoc volunteers with PPE housed by Lagan Valley Regional Park.

We anticipate creating approximately 15 volunteer rangers who would remain actively involved in the Regional Park during the course of the Landscape Partnership Scheme and beyond. We have allowed a separate budget for this group, as presented in Appendix O

Lagan Valley Regional Park proposes to house the equipment and personal protective equipment for all volunteers. This would ensure that the equipment and PPE is kept in working order and is fit for purpose.

### **Specialised Guide**

Specialised guides would work in a similar arrangement as the volunteer rangers. This project is targeting individuals more interested in guiding walks, facilitating opening of the Lock Keeper's Cottage and taking historical or heritage focussed tours.

Similar to the Volunteer rangers, a third party agreement would be drafted where Lagan Valley Regional Park commits to providing 1 training course, while the specialised guide commits to being involved in 3 guided walks.

Flexibility is required in terms of the training as some guides are expected to remain long term, while others may only be available for a short period. A complete list of personal protective equipment and tools is presented along with costs in Appendix O.



## 5.6 LVRP Newsletter

The objective of the newsletter is to raise the profile of Lagan Valley Regional Park, advise locals of events and volunteering opportunities, increase the user types and numbers utilising the Regional Park.

A quarterly newsletter will be produced by the project team, which will provide for the following information:

- Events
- Volunteering opportunities
- Features of interest in the Regional Park
- Seasons
- Promotional Campaigns
- Wildlife
- How to get involved.

4,000 hard copies will be produced per quarter with the first publication occurring in the second quarter of Year 1. This is to ensure that the project team is in place and familiar with their roles and the Lagan Valley Regional Park's aims and objectives.

The quantities required will be reviewed annually to ensure that over or under production does not occur. The estimated annual production numbers are:



The content of the newsletter will be principally produced in house, with all text being created by the project team and where possible members of the public. A budget has been provided for the printing costs and to allow involvement from a graphic designer. The involvement of a graphic designer will be front loaded for year 1. Once a template has been completed it is expected that their involvement will lessen.

Distribution of the newsletter will complement that of the existing leaflet distribution by LVRP which includes tourist information centres, libraries, Council offices, shops within and

immediately surrounding the Regional Park. It is intended to widen this to include for doctor's surgeries within the Belfast and Lisburn areas. This will be achieved through posting and an allowance has been provided for this (approximately 300/quarter).

As the newsletter will also be available via email and through the Lagan Valley Regional Park Website it is envisaged that more than the 4,000 printed copies will be utilised in any given quarter. If this is not addressing the entire target audience as identified in the Access and Audience Development Plan, it is planned to utilise core Landscape Partnership Scheme staff, community groups and Volunteers to widen the distribution even further.

Disabled users are a target audience as identified in the Access and Audience Development Plan. To ensure maximum involvement of this audience, a provision to produce a large font version of the newsletter has also been included.

## **5.7 Art competition**

The art campaign will primarily target schools and aims to encourage students to enter the regional park and examine all it has to offer.

The art competition will be an annual event, where schools are asked to create drawings of varying themes within the Regional Park. These may include, animals found in the park, important buildings in the park, trees in the park or seasons.

The competition will be promoted through a poster campaign, with 3 winning drawings being selected each year. Prizes will be materials for school which equal £130 for first prize, £80 for second and £50 for third.

Depending on the number of entries it may be necessary to provide for differing age groups, with the prizes being re-allocated to individuals rather than the school itself. This will be decided by a panel that will be formed to judge the entries and will include Landscape Partnership Scheme staff, general public and teachers.

## **5.8 Photo competition**

The photo competition aims to encourage members of the public to explore Lagan Valley Regional Park. The photo competition will be an annual event, where competitors take photos within the Regional Park which are judged by a panel comprised of members of the public & Landscape Partnership Scheme staff.

The theme for each year will vary. There will be prizes awarded to the top 3 entries each year, with first prize receiving £200, second prize £100 and third prize £70.

The competition will be aimed at amateur photographers and the copyright of the winning entries will be owned by Lagan Valley Regional Park. It is expected that the photo competition will largely target an adult audience, while the art campaign described in Section 5.7 will attract a younger age group.

Costs outlined in Section 5.10 allow for the prize money as detailed above. Both the photo and art competitions may be opportunities for sponsorship from retail businesses.

## **5.9 Name our Kingfisher campaign**

Lagan Valley Regional Park recognises the important role it has to play in the promotion of Biodiversity. Biodiversity Northern Ireland have recently launched a campaign, called 'It's in our nature' to raise the profile of biodiversity. Its aim is to increase the knowledge and enjoyment of the whole variety of natural life around us.

To aid this campaign, 4 characters have been developed to promote and increase the public profile of the campaign. A number of other voluntary organisations throughout Northern Ireland are also involved with the campaign.

To this end, Lagan Valley Regional Park intends to develop its own character, namely a kingfisher. The reason for choosing this species is 2 fold, firstly the kingfisher is the Regional Parks' logo and secondly it is a recognised species for which we intend to undertake specific conservation projects, as detailed in Section 3.5.

The 'Name our Kingfisher Campaign' involves developing a character in a similar profile as those existing characters. We intend to run a public relations campaign with schools to name the character, the winning name being chosen from a committee which will include members of the public.

Information will be provided through our website and newsletter to promote the campaign and increase the profile of biodiversity. This will link with the existing Biodiversity NI website.

We expect that the 'Name our Kingfisher' competition which will target schools will generate interest and actively engage with the younger generation.

Costs have been included for a graphic designer to design the character, provision for a leaflet campaign and prizes for the winning entrants. Section 5.10 outlines the costs for this scheme.



## 6.0 BUILT HERITAGE RESTORATION

**Objective:** To restore the Lock Keeper's Cottage back to its original state and develop it as an interpretative centre. To restore the adjoining lock (No.3) to working order.

Three programmes will be developed under this scheme, which are:

- Restoration of the Lock Keeper's Cottage
- Restoration of Lock No. 3
- Development of a new interpretation centre

### 6.1 Lock Keeper's Cottage Restoration

The Lock Keeper's Cottage will be restored to its original state and will be used to demonstrate the family life experienced by the Lock Keeper and his family.

In 2004, Ferguson McIlveen undertook an assessment of the Lock Keeper's Cottage and prepared a series of reports on their findings, which included:

- Existing Building condition report,
- Photographic record
- Structural Engineers Report

The condition report assessed the Lock Keeper's Cottage dwelling, providing descriptions on the external and internal walls, chimney stacks, windows, doors, roof and stairs. The report provided recommendations on how to ensure the features of the cottage would be sympathetically restored.

During the development phase, Ferguson McIlveen prepared plans, sections and elevations which are presented in Appendix W. Drawing No L502 outlines the existing conditions of the cottage features while drawing No. L503 details the proposed plans. These proposed plans outline graphically the proposed restoration techniques which will be adopted during Stage 2.

This includes for the provision of:

- New roof covered with natural slate
- Installation of new single glazed windows and new stone cills where appropriate
- Both ground floor windows to be provided with removable lift-off timber shutters
- Installation of new cast iron gutters and down pipes
- Internal walls to have a new lime finish applied
- New concrete floor with quarry tile finish
- Timber lintels to be replaced

The restoration will recreate the vernacular 2-storey 4-bedroomed building. As detailed in Section 2.5 the restored cottage will house fixtures and fittings which are replicas of those found in the house during the time it was occupied by the Kirkpatrick family.

It is intended to open the Lock Keeper's Cottage to the public in order that they may appreciate what life was like for the Lock Keeper and his family. The practicalities involved in opening the building and ensuring its security will be linked with the management of the Interpretation centre.

At a recent Lagan Valley Regional Park, Advisory Committee Meeting, it was decided that the new building (Interpretation centre) will be used to house staff from Lagan Valley Regional Park, including the new staff resulting from the Landscape Partnership Scheme. The specifics on the management arrangement between Castlereagh Borough Council and Lagan Valley Regional Park are as yet incomplete. It is envisaged that LVRP staff will take responsibility of opening the Lock Keeper's Cottage and facilitate pre-arranged visits for schools and visitors. It is likely that this service will be offset against any rental agreement between the two organisations. Given the recent decision by Lagan Valley Regional Park, these details are as yet unavailable.

Price-water-house Coopers have been commissioned by Castlereagh Borough Council to prepare a 5 year business plan for the cottage and the new interpretation facility. The elements examined include a management plan, financial plan, assessing the risks, monitoring and evaluation. In addition the plan undertakes a market review of similar operations in Northern Ireland, including Scarva centre (Newry), Money Penny (Portadown) and the Lagan Lookout Centre (Belfast). Obviously the management and financial plans of the entire site is heavily dependant on the tenancy agreement between the Council and third party utilising the office space in the new building.

As the decision by Lagan Valley Regional Park., to avail of the office space is a recent one the business plan is as yet incomplete. A completed Business plan will be made available at the earliest convenience which will be by December 20<sup>th</sup> 2006. The business plan will provide complete details on the cost required to complete the restoration of the Lock Keeper's Cottage.

## 6.2 Restoration of Lock No.3

Lock No.3 forms part of the Lagan Navigation network which was opened in 1763. Lock No. 3 is the only remaining site on the Lagan Navigation offering scope for integrated restoration of a surviving lock and lock house (Lock Keeper's Cottage). Being abandoned during the 1950's, the Lock gates were removed which rendered the network un-navigable.

Lock No. 3 forms part of waterway/canal assets currently owned by Department of Culture, Arts and Leisure (DCAL). In December 2005, Ferguson McIlveen was commissioned by DCAL to take forward the proposals for the restoration of Lock 3.

Ferguson McIlveen was tasked with:

- Undertaking an inspection and structural assessment of the existing Lock No.3, and to
- Develop a design for the renovation of the Lock

De-silting and cleaning of the Lock was undertaken by Rivers Agency, which allowed for the inspection to be completed. During the entire process consultation was undertaken with the Environment and Heritage Service, Built Heritage and the Planning Service.

In May 2006 Ferguson McIlveen produced a Survey Report (Appendix M) with recommendations outlining the works necessary to restore the Lock structure for various heritage and operational purposes. The 4 options presented are:

- Restore Lock structure (non operational and dewatered)
- Restore Lock structure (non operational and re-watered)
- Restore Lock structure for operational use (re-watered)
- Restore Navigation between Lock No.2 at Corbie Wood and Lock 4 at Edenderry

The structural inspection found that the existing Lock No.3 is relatively sound and can be restored to its original dimensions as a working lock. A recommendation was made to adopt Option 2 which includes for the restoration of the Lock structure, cleaning out of the upstream canal channel and the provision of a water supply from the River Lagan via a 300mm diameter pipe. DCAL have agreed to undertake the cleaning out of the upstream canal as in-kind contribution to the scheme at an estimated cost of £20,000.

A series of drawings are presented along with the report in Appendix M and these detail:

Drawing Number	Detail
201	Layout plan of Lock No.3 and Lock Keeper's Cottage
202	Schematic illustrating the existing Lock conditions
203	Proposed restoration works for Lock no. 3
204	Detail on Lock gates
205	Miscellaneous – Cill details, detailing mooring rings, bollard base, Lock wall dowel connection, details of Lock base slab
206	Miscellaneous – Details for ladder positioning (elevations etc.)

Consultation is on going with the Planning Service and the need for planning permission is as yet undetermined.

On 6<sup>th</sup> November 2006 a Scheduled monument consent (Appendix X) was received from Built Heritage section of the Environment and Heritage Service. This Consent outlines the agreed structural restoration of Lock No.3 and allows for the following works to be undertaken:

- Removal of extant timber planking on base and cills of the lock
- Covering the base and cills with geotextile and a layer of reinforced concrete, 150-200mm thick
- Removal and resetting of coping stones, with the addition of replacement coping stones where missing
- Re-pointing of lock walls, with the addition of replacement stone where needed
- Repair and resurfacing, where necessary, heel post quoins
- Fitting of timber mitre gates
- Addition of ancillary fittings (ladders, scotring rings, mooring bollards, mooring rings etc.)
- Raising the parapet walls on the adjacent masonry footbridge
- Cleaning out of the canal channel upstream with the removal of all trees and bushes within the canal bed.
- Insertion of a 300mm diameter supply pipe laid from the R. Lagan to the upstream end of the canal channel, to provide water flow and prevent stagnation.

A programme of works outlining the timetable to be adopted for the works involved in the Restoration of Lock No.3 is presented in Appendix N.



## 7.0 URBAN IMPROVEMENTS

The Urban Improvement scheme is designed to provide a range of social, environmental, community and economic benefits, increase enhancement and usage of the waterfront environment, and provide improved amenity, recreation and public realm facilities within the Lagan Valley Regional Park. The scheme aims to improve riverside access at two key locations in the Lisburn City area.

The 2 programmes being delivered under this scheme are:

- Millbrook riverside area
- Huguenot riverside area

Building Design Partnership Ltd was commissioned by Lisburn City Council to undertake an assessment of the area and provide landscape advice with regards to the two project areas. The findings of this assessment and the recommendations are presented in a report in Appendix V.

### 7.1 Introduction

It was felt appropriate that the two urban improvement projects should be considered as part of an overall master plan. Therefore within the consultants report (presented in Appendix V) in addition to the Landscape Partnership Projects, there are also various components identified for which Lisburn City Council or other bodies will be seeking to fund in the future. These components are identified separately throughout the report but aim to provide context for the 2 riverside projects.

The primary objectives for both the urban improvement projects are to

- Improve access and linkages into and through the Lagan Valley Regional Park
- Provide interpretative information on the natural habitats and the heritage of the area, particularly the development of the canal and the linen industry
- Restore and create natural habitats
- Restore elements of the canal and other historical artefacts
- Provide amenity facilities relating to the river and canal
- Create sites for recreation areas for adjacent housing areas within the Park

The scheme has been developed through public consultation with local community groups and the general public. The scheme has been widely publicised in local newspapers, the proposals have been available for inspection at Lisburn City Council offices and there has been a public meeting on the proposals. In addition there has been consultation with statutory bodies that have responsibilities for different aspects of the Park, service authorities

and the Northern Ireland Housing Executive which is responsible for much of the housing and land adjacent to this section of the park.

Drawings are presented in Appendix V which illustrates many of the project schematic details on many of the project details, which includes:

Drawing Reference	Drawing title & detail
(9-) L001	<b>Site Plan</b> – This drawing graphically represents the context of the 2 Urban Improvement projects.
(9-) L002	<b>Millbrook</b> – The details the locations of the interpretation panels, entrance features, fishing platforms, timber decking location and planting proposals
(9-) L003	<b>Hillhall</b> – Although not forming part of the Urban improvement scheme this drawing illustrates some of the aspirations for this area which borders both the urban improvement scheme project areas.
(9-) L004	<b>Huguenot Park</b> – This drawing details some of the specifics for the Huguenot project including proposed interpretation panels, entrance features, adventure play area and proposed planting.
(9-) L005	<b>Huguenot Habitat</b> – This drawing completes the details for the Huguenot area which includes for restoration of a fishing pond, interpretation panels, footbridge restoration and entrance gateways
(9-) L006	<b>Hilden</b> - Although not forming part of the Urban improvement scheme this drawing illustrates some of the aspirations for this area which borders both the urban improvement scheme project areas.
(9-) L007	<b>Glenmore</b> - Although not forming part of the Urban improvement scheme this drawing illustrates some of the aspirations for this area which borders both the urban improvement scheme project areas.

## 7.2 Shared components

Themes are shared by both the Millbrook and Huguenot schemes which are noted below:

- Habitat enhancement throughout the project areas.

Most of the project area has a limited or no maintenance management regime with much of the habitat being classed as rough grassland. There is also a problem in Millbrook and Huguenot of the presence of Japanese Knotweed. It is proposed to implement a programme for the elimination of invasive species, primarily Japanese Knotweed. There will then be a programme of enhancing the existing habitats and enhancing areas of wetland and grassland, restoring overgrown ponds and river and stream banks.

- The provision of interpretative information throughout the project areas.

The current entrance areas into the Regional Park in this area are not clearly identified. It is intended to create entrance features and provide interpretation panels at key entrance points to provide a delineation of the park. These interpretation panels will provide information specifically on the area, and will include the built and natural environments. This area has a steep history in the linen industry and use of the canal, both of which will be examined in the interpretation panels.

### **7.3 Millbrook Riverside area**

Millbrook is a former floodplain of the River Lagan. The area has no formal entrance features with the current main entrance being delineated with boulders, which aims to restrict access into the park of motorised vehicles. The area is overgrown with vegetation and the path network is uneven and in parts secluded.

The aims of the project include for the provision of:

- Entrance features
- Enhancement of a wetland area with a timber board walk and interpretation panels,
- Installation of fishing platforms which will be accessible by disabled users.

Most of the access points will be formalised by the introduction of gateways, which will help define the entrances into the Park. It is also intended to incorporate information signage at key entrance areas and points of interest throughout the area. This will be undertaken in keeping with the Lagan Valley Regional Park's Interpretation Strategy.

Paths will be provided to allow easy access to the river for game fishing and disabled platforms will be incorporated where suitable. Platforms will be provided for coarse fishing along sections of the canal.

As noted in Section 7.1 drawings providing the details on the project elements are presented in Appendix V. Within Drawing (9) L002 –Millbrook reference is made to the location for the entrance features, paving, gates, boardwalks and fishing platforms which will form this project. The following drawings are also presented in Appendix V, which detail the specifics of the aforementioned project elements.

Drawing Reference	Content
(97) L004	Paving Entrance
(97) L005	Path Detail
(97) L006	Millbrook Entrance
(97) L007	Mild Steel Kissing Gate
(97) L009	Timber Kissing Gate
(97) L013	Wetland Edge Detail
(97) L015	Timber Boardwalk
(97) L016	Fishing Platform

## 7.4 Huguenot Riverside Area

Huguenot project area is located between a dense residential area and the Blue Bridge. The existing entrance is open and provides access to the Water Service Pumping station and the electricity sub station. Given the need for vehicular access it is proposed to introduce kissing gates at the entrance point along with a feature fence and field gate. This will allow for the continued access to authorised vehicles while providing open views into the Regional park.

The individual aims of the Huguenot riverside project include:

- Design of amenity open space including an adventure playground at Huguenot.
- Entrance features,
- Upgrading of paths,
- Planting,
- Habitat enhancement,
- Removal of Invasive species.

An adventure playground is proposed with aerial ropeway, slides, swings and seating within the area, encouraging use and participation in the area by families of local residents and visitors.

Within the remit of this project there is a provision for the development of a basketball court. This area is used by some local residents as a bonfire site which would obviously jeopardise the potential longevity of any development. It is proposed to provide a metallic plate under the basketball court so that should local residents continue to use it as a bonfire site, it can still remain as a basketball court. Consultation is ongoing with local residents to encourage

the use of a beacon rather than a bonfire during the July 12<sup>th</sup> events. This came to light during a public meeting where residents were given the opportunity to comment on the content of the projects.

This project will include the upgrading of existing paths, the restoration of the '49 steps', a former workers' access to the mill, and the restoration and upgrading of the footbridges within the project areas.

As noted in Section 7.1 drawings providing the details on the project elements are presented in Appendix V. Within Drawing (9) L004 Huguenot Park and (9) L005 –Huguenot Habitat reference is made to the location for the entrance features, paving, gates, wetland enhancement and fishing platforms which will form this project. The following drawings are also presented in Appendix V, which detail the specifics of the aforementioned project elements.

(97) L001	Timber Gate
(97) L003	Timber Stile
(97) L004	Paving Entrance
(97) L005	Path Detail
(97) L008	Huguenot Entrance
(97) L009	Timber Kissing Gate
(97) L011	Field and Kissing Gate
(97) L013	Wetland Edge Detail
(97) L014	Fishing Pond Edge
(97) L016	Fishing Platform

Section 7.5 outlines the costs associated with the urban improvement scheme. Further details on all project elements are available in Report prepared by BDP presented in Appendix V.



### 8.0 PROJECT MANAGEMENT COST

Project management costs refer to the various components, which will be required to deliver the Lagan Valley Regional Park's, Landscape Partnership Scheme. These include:



The following table details the subtotals of each of the individual schemes (2). Each subtotal is then presented as a percentage of the total (3). The total for project management costs (£591,323) is then distributed across each scheme based on this calculated percentage as presented in column 4. The total for each scheme is equal to the project costs (2) plus the allocation for Project management costs (2 & 4 = 5).



**9.0 SUMMARY OF COSTS**




**10.0 PROGRAMME DELIVERY – YEAR 1 (2007 – 2008)**

The following programme of works assumes that Stage 2 approval would be provided in April 2007, with the necessary contract issues being completed within the first month. Appointment of staff and their inductions and familiarisation with Lagan Valley Regional Park will be undertaken during the second month with the projects commencing in the 3<sup>rd</sup> month.

<b>SCHEME &amp; PROJECTS</b>	<b>April '07</b>	<b>May '07</b>	<b>June '07</b>	<b>July '07</b>	<b>August '07</b>	<b>September '07</b>	<b>October '07</b>	<b>November '07</b>	<b>December '07</b>	<b>January '08</b>	<b>February '08</b>	<b>March '08</b>
<b>Contract signing</b>												
<b>Appointment of Project staff</b>												
<b>Staff inductions</b>												
<b>INTERPRETATION DEVELOPMENT</b>												
<b>Signage</b>												
Large Interpretation sign												
Name signs												
<b>Eco-trail development</b>												
<b>Sensory information</b>												
Audio loop in Lock Keepers Cottage			See comments on interpretation within the Lock Keeper's Cottage below									

SCHEME & PROJECTS	April '07	May '07	June '07	July '07	August '07	September '07	October '07	November '07	December '07	January '08	February '08	March '08
Tactile Braille signs												
Collection of historical information												
Heritage Audio Trail												
<b>Interpretation within the Lock Keeper's Cottage</b>												
Exterior signage			All interpretation within the Lock Keeper's Cottage will be developed in keeping with the scheduled programme of works prepared for its restoration as presented in Appendix N. This is likely to be towards the end of Year 1, when most restoration works have been completed.									
Visual Interpretation												
Interpretation within visitors centre												
Development of working lock												
Provision of panels												
<b>Website development</b>												
<b>SPECIES SURVEY &amp; CONSERVATION</b>												
Establishment of a red squirrel conservation group												
Recording of Badger locations												
Bird conservation												
<b>HABITAT MANAGEMENT &amp; ENHANCEMENT</b>												
Grassland Management												

SCHEME & PROJECTS	April '07	May '07	June '07	July '07	August '07	September '07	October '07	November '07	December '07	January '08	February '08	March '08
Wetland Enhancement												
Acorn Tree project												
<b>VOLUNTEER &amp; COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION</b>												
<b>Conservation focussed volunteer projects</b>												
Volunteer Service Lisburn												
Grassroots												
Development of an Educational Resource Pack												
Student Placements												
Drumbeg village projects												
'Getting involved' initiative												
Wildlife recording sheets												
Volunteer Ranger												
Specialised guides												
LVRP Newsletter												
Photo competition												
Art Campaign												

SCHEME & PROJECTS	April '07	May '07	June '07	July '07	August '07	September '07	October '07	November '07	December '07	January '08	February '08	March '08
Name our Kingfisher												
<b>BUILT HERITAGE</b>												
Restoration of Lock Keeper's Cottage	A detailed programme of works is presented in Appendix N for the built heritage elements.											
Restoration of Lock No. 3												
Interpretation Centre												
<b>URBAN IMPROVEMENTS</b>												
Huguenot												
Millbrook												