

The New Reach

Aims and Objectives and Action Plan from 2016

For background see 'New Reach Review and Update'

New Reach – Aims and Objectives.

The Millennium Green Trust will work with the landowners, statutory organisations, the local community, and other partners to achieve these aims and objectives

Aims

The following aims will guide these proposals:

- **Ensure that the present role of the New Reach as a flood alleviation channel is maintained.**
- **To maintain and improve the New Reach as a local amenity.**
- **To maintain and improve the wildlife interest of the New Reach**
- **To conserve the remaining elements of the Blyth Navigation.**

These reflect Aims & Objectives in the Millennium Green Management Plan.

Objectives

Flood Alleviation.

- Work with the Environment Agency to reduce the deposition of silt in the New Reach by either the reduction of silt load in flood waters and/or reducing the number of times river water overtops the sill at Patrick Stead Lock.
- Ensure the continued dredging of the New Reach at regular intervals.
- Ensure all future storm water outlets on the Green have some form of attenuation to prevent further loading at times of peak flow.

Amenity

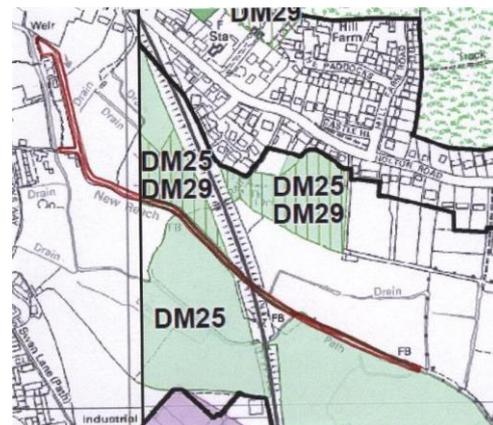
- Ensure that during the summer there is at least 20% open water.
- Ensure the surface of the towpath is maintained to a high standard to allow all-year use
- Carry out regular mowing of a strip either side of the towpath during the growing season.
- Control tall vigorous plant growth between the towpath and water's edge and between towpath and hedge base.
- Restore the hedge between the towpath and Angel Meadow and cut in late winter to achieve a 2-metre-high "A" shape wherever possible.

Wildlife

- Monitor water quality in New Reach and seek to maintain it at a high level.
- Optimise the fish population.
- Leave the north bank, where in the ownership of the MGT, unmanaged

Historic Heritage

- Raise awareness of the historic importance of the Blyth Navigation.
- Conserve the remaining elements of the Patrick Stead Lock.
- Install on-site interpretation for the Patrick Stead Lock
- Conserve the remaining elements of Halesworth Lock preventing further deterioration as a matter of urgency.
- Provide interpretation of Halesworth Lock.
- Pursue official designations for remaining features of the Blyth Navigation.



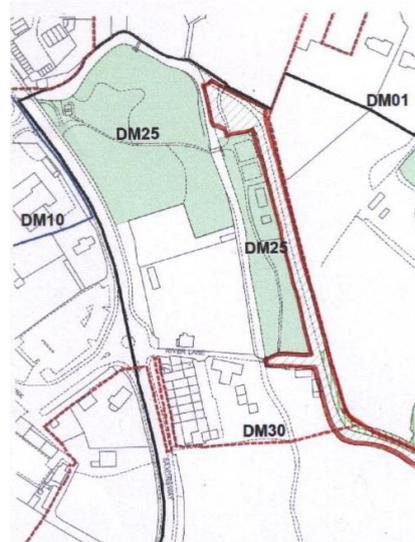
Action Plan from October 2016

Patrick Stead Lock to River Lane.

- Treat re-growth from trees removed from side wall of Patrick Stead Lock.
- Seek ways to reduce silt deposition downstream of the lock.
- Monitor length of sand bar

River Lane to White Bridge.

- Continue to restore the hedge alongside towpath by coppicing overgrown hedgerow shrubs and promoting hedgerow plants in the gap.
- Seat improvements
- Monitor weed removal following EA work planned for autumn 2016 and carry out summer weed cutting achieve target of 20% open water.
- Strim bankside vegetation at least 3 times per growing season alongside towpath.
- Remove any water soldier that escapes from Folly Meadow ditch.
- Ask advice from EA on enhancing fish population which seems to have deteriorated recently.
- Seek to improve accessibility for wheelchairs and buggies across White Bridge and seek opportunities to improve its appearance.



to

White Bridge to Railway Bridge.

- Strim bankside vegetation according to attached sketch.
- Mow towpath for 3 metre width regularly each summer
- Continue to explore opportunities for Environment Agency dredging equipment to access this area.
- Explore opportunities to raise the water level throughout this section.

Railway Bridge to Halesworth Lock.

- Remove tree and shrub growth from the vicinity of the Halesworth Lock to reduce damage to the structure.
- Improve access to the lock to enable more effective interpretation
- Interpretation discussions to involve Halesworth Museum

This Action Plan will be subject to annual review