



**SOUTH  
KESTEVEN  
DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

**Environment Overview and Scrutiny  
Committee**

15 December 2020

**Report of:** Councillor Dr Peter Moseley

Cabinet Member for Commercial and Operations



**Update for trial rewilding projects**

This report provides an update on the trial period July 2020 to November 2020.

**Report Author**

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	<b>Decision type:</b>	<b>Wards:</b>
	<b>Administrative</b>	<b>All Wards</b>
<b>Reviewed by:</b>	Paul Stokes, Corporate Operations Lead, Corporate Operations Team	30 November 2020
<b>Approved by:</b>	Gary Smith, Strategic Director, Commercial & Operations	30 November 2020
<b>Signed off by:</b>	Councillor Dr Peter Moseley, Cabinet member for Commercial and Operations	30 November 2020
<b>Recommendation (s) to the decision maker (s)</b>		

- 1. That the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee notes the contents of the report and the progress being made with the rewilding trial at this early stage.**

## 1 The Background to the Report

- 1.1 Following consultation, proposals for a rewilding trial were brought before the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the 23rd June 2020. Support was given to begin trials in Stamford and Market Deeping.
- 1.2 This report is provided to update Members of the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the rewilding process carried out in line with the following:
- Rewilding is a process that allows nature to take back control and, as the area grows tall grasses and other plant species, this encourages wildlife, insects, birds and mammals. Over time more species move in and this creates a balanced natural environment.
  - Areas to be 'rewilded' are generally larger areas.
  - The area will receive minimum essential maintenance and the area allowed to grow as nature intended.
- 1.3 Where locations were identified ward Members and local town councils were contacted with a request to carry out consultation with all interested parties in the area.
- 1.4 Works to begin rewilding were actioned in July 2020.
- 1.5 Challenges and solutions:
- Residents and visitors to the areas understand what they see in terms of recognising that the area has not simply been forgotten as well as acknowledging the aims and benefits.
  - This will be achieved by continuing grass cutting adjacent and/or through the rewilded areas, dependent on the particular scheme. In addition, the installation of information boards at each location and, whilst there has been a delay, these are due for installation by mid-December 2020.

## 2 Update of Progress

The trial rewilding projects are very much in the early stages and the use of clearly cut paths show where areas are no longer cut, thus allowing nature to take back control, supported by the installation of information boards. The table below presents feedback from Ward Members and visitors regarding each location.

Location	Ward members	Feedback from ward Members/local residents/project officers
<b>Market and West Deeping Ward: Tattershall Drive, Market Deeping</b>	Cllr Ashley Baxter Cllr Virginia Moran Cllr Bob Broughton	Positive feedback from site users, and feedback from Facebook provided by ward Members. NB. The trial will take at least 2 seasons to see what is starting to establish within the rewilded areas.
<b>Stamford St John's Ward: Foxglove Road, Stamford</b>	Cllr John Dawson Cllr Susan Sandall	Positive feedback from site users, who felt it was encouraging more visitors onto the location and agreed it will take at least 2 seasons to see what is starting to establish.
<b>Bourne West Ward: Oak Crescent Bourne</b>	Cllr Helen Crawford Cllr Anna Kelly	The previously proposed locations were rejected; however, Oak Crescent has been identified as an alternative proposal. In late October 2020, ward Members and Bourne

		<p>Town Council were requested to carry out a consultation with all interested parties in the area. Bourne Town Council responded in mid-November to say that having consulted with the local residents it was decided that Oak Crescent was not a suitable location for the rewilding project as it is popular with dog walkers and a well-used play area. Consideration can be given to suggest a revised, smaller rewilding scheme for Oak Crescent.</p>
<p><b>Grantham St Wulfram's Ward: Queen Elizabeth Park</b></p>	<p>Cllr Jacky Smith Cllr Ray Wootten</p>	<p>The Witham/Slea Blue Green corridor partnership project, part funded by the European Regional Development Fund, is designed to restore and reconnect the river and river corridors through the urban reaches of both Grantham and Sleaford. Works being undertaken in Queen Elizabeth Park include reconnecting the Witham to its flood plain and creating two wetland habitats, meadow creations and the addition of berms and bank softening measures to reduce the impacts of canalisation and reinstate more natural flow dynamics and river process. The works have undergone a feasibility study and consultation with relevant stakeholder groups including the Friends of QEP and the Lincolnshire Wildlife Trusts. Further wider public engagement is being undertaken via a bespoke project website: <a href="https://www.withamsleabluegreencorridor.co.uk">https://www.withamsleabluegreencorridor.co.uk</a> with the formal public engagement consultation commencing in March 2021.</p>

- 2.1 A further update/feedback report is suggested could be added to the agenda for review by the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee after the end of the main growing season in October 2021. No other options have been considered.

### **3 Next Steps – Communication and Implementation of the Decision**

- 3.1 Other schemes could be looked at and considered after the growing season 2021 at locations proposed by ward Members and/or the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In preparation for a possible wider expansion, a potential future trial rewilding project at Jubilee Park (Deeping St James) will be sent out to ward Members for Deeping St James and copied to the clerk of Deeping St James Parish Council in December 2020.

### **4 Financial Implications**

- 4.1 There are no financial implications arising from this report.

Existing internal resource will manage delivery of the areas selected for rewilding.

Funding for the Blue Green Project has already been allocated which includes external grant funding.

## **5 Legal and Governance Implications**

5.1 There are no additional legal implications arising from this report.

## **6 Equality and Safeguarding Implications**

6.1 Equality and safeguarding implications have been considered as part of this report and no specific high risks have been identified.

## **7 Risk and Mitigation**

7.1 Risk has been considered as part of this report and no specific high risks have been identified.

## **8 Community Safety Implications**

8.1 There are no key community safety implications arising from this report.

## **9 How will the recommendations support South Kesteven District Council's declaration of a climate emergency?**

9.1 The implications of rewilding are small on their own, however they help to create a balanced natural environment. Over time this continues to support and benefit actions taken with regard to South Kesteven District Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency.

## **10 Background Papers**

10.1 Previous Environment Overview and Scrutiny updates.

## **11 Appendices**

11.1 Appendix One: Photographs of Foxglove Road (Stamford) – photographs of Tattershall Drive (Market Deeping) and an overhead plan of Queen Elizabeth Park (Grantham)

<b>Report Timeline:</b>	Date of Publication on Forward Plan (if required)	Not required
	Previously Considered by: Environment Overview and Scrutiny committee	23 June 2020
	Final Decision date	After October 2021