

Lumley Park Burn Project **Improving the Coalfield Area for People and Wildlife**

As part of the work of the Wear Catchment Partnership a number of organisations have come together to develop a project for the Coalfield area that focuses on the area's natural environment and the benefits it brings to people. Currently Durham Wildlife Trust is leading on the development of the project, supported by a range of organisations such as local councils, charities, businesses and Government agencies.

The projects being considered include measures that would:

- improve local greenspaces for wildlife and make them more accessible for people;
- enhance local streams and water courses, improving water quality and making them better for wildlife;
- provide more walking and cycling opportunities that link to the area's heritage
- create training opportunities for local people to learn new skills.

Sustainability has to be the central theme of whatever project finally emerges from the development process. The work delivered should improve the environment of the area around Lumley Park Burn, helping to address the climate and ecological emergency we are all facing, and also provide social and economic benefits to the people of the area.

The projects that are delivered need to be designed so that they can be easily managed and continue to provide the desired benefits. It will take many years to overcome the problems the project hopes to address, particularly action to stop climate change.

The Way Forward

The Covid 19 crisis has delayed development of the project and means that the essential public engagement needed to create the right project for the area will have to be done in a different way. Many potential funding organisations are currently closed to applications or are investing their funds in the emergency response to Covid 19. However, perhaps one positive that has come out of this terrible situation we have all faced is a change in a way we feel about the natural environment and places where we live. Many of us now place greater value on nature and realise how important the natural world is to us all.

Times scale

Our plan is to secure funding via the National Lottery Heritage Fund which is a three stage process. It is an ambitious plan, but one that the area deserves. The first stage is to submit an Expression of Interest in October. If the Heritage Fund likes the

project plan, an application for development funding will be made in the spring 2021. If successful, the development stage will take a year to complete and a second stage application will be made in by the summer 2022. The delivery phase will start spring of 2023 and last for a number of years.

This is an exciting prospect and we need you to help us shape it. Please share your views about what is important to you in the area around Lumley Park Burn and what you want to see happen. Please click on the link below:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLScY9R9bkIXKbGdEM7Kxhu96LJp5jZUYf8nm1OsJnwOKp_NCMg/viewform?usp=sf_link

