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Agency

# a better place for all

River Ancholme Waterway Plan



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# Introduction

We are the navigation authority responsible for the River Ancholme. We have produced this Waterway Plan to address our responsibilities for recreation and as a navigation authority for this river.

ENVIRONMENT AGENCY



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## Introduction



Our vision is that through our philosophy *Your Rivers for Life*, we will maintain, improve and develop our river navigation so that we offer all of our users safe facilities comparable with the best in Europe. We will do this in a sustainable manner.

We will ensure that our river navigations are managed in a way that maintains an equitable balance between the various uses, and recognises the full range of benefits the river can deliver for boaters and other recreation activities such as walking and fishing, and for the wildlife that depends on the natural riverine environment.



This plan is linked to the Quality of Life theme as set out in our Corporate Strategy 2006 – 2011. By taking this theme into account we will help local authorities and others to improve local environments, particularly in disadvantaged areas. We will also play our part to encourage more people from more diverse backgrounds to enjoy and care about their water environment, for example providing opportunities for them to enjoy our rivers. These goals can only be achieved through action-orientated partnerships.

We are a member of the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities and we endorse its strategy for waterways, *Steering a Fresh Course*. Government has also set out its requirements from navigation authorities in the policy document *Waterways for Tomorrow (Department for the Environment, Transport and the Regions, July 2000)*. Together these documents set a clear framework for which we are required to:

- Increase the economic and social benefits offered by waterways, maximising regeneration.
- Encourage people to make use of the inland waterways for leisure and recreation, tourism and sport.

- Protect historic buildings and areas.
- Maintain and enhance biodiversity and landscape value.
- Encourage freight and passenger transport by boat.

How we will achieve this is set out in our waterway strategy *Your Rivers for Life – a strategy for the development of navigable rivers 2004-2007* and our Corporate Strategy 2006-2011. The River Ancholme Waterway Plan translates these documents into significant action for the river.

We have developed this plan with advice from key groups who have an interest in the river. We are very grateful for this support and are well aware that achieving many of the plan's aims will only be possible through the actions of our partners. We hope they will adopt the River Ancholme Waterway Plan and will modify their own plans and policy documents to reflect it. In particular, we wish our partners to recognise the role the waterways play in delivering regeneration to our rural economies.



## Context

### The river

The River Ancholme provides approximately 33 km/21 miles of navigable waterway. The river lies within a broad clay vale that reaches from Bishopbridge to South Ferriby, where it enters the Humber Estuary. Boats have travelled on the River Ancholme for many hundreds of years. In the past, the River Ancholme represented an important route for the transportation of cargo, linking rural areas with the industrial towns of Yorkshire and beyond. Today the river is almost exclusively used for recreation with over 200 boats registered on the system. Besides boating, leisure pursuits on the river include angling, rowing, canoeing and walking, as footpath access is good along the river banks.

Use of the River Ancholme is different from many of our other rivers in that it is regularly used by visiting and resident sea-going boats (about 75% of the boats using the River Ancholme) that take advantage of the good coastal links to the North Sea through the River Humber, at South Ferriby.

The River Ancholme Waterway Plan is written primarily to meet the needs of boat users; however, the needs of the diverse local population and the use they make of this river are also an integral part of this plan.

**Map number 1** provides an overview of the River Ancholme Navigation.

### Sustainability

The Waterway Plan aims to be a model for sustainable development of the river. Sustainable development is all about ensuring a better quality of life for everyone, now and for future generations to come. By 'quality of life' we mean 'everyone will have the opportunity to enjoy a high quality environment that is clean, green and healthy, for now and for future generations. More people will care for, use, appreciate and enjoy their environment'.



### Open space and access

Recognising the value of open space and access is vital to the success of the plan. There is also increasing recognition of the contribution that open space can make to people's health and well-being. Government's planning guidance defines green space as "all open space of public value, including not just land, but also areas of water such as rivers, canals, lakes and reservoirs which offer important opportunities for sport and recreation and can also act as a visual amenity."

Leisure and tourism activities have implications for the environment, economy and social fabric of the River Ancholme corridor. This is especially apparent within the market town of Brigg. It is a tourism and leisure resource that supports a wide range of activities and

facilities, including holiday accommodation, powered and non-powered boating (such as rowing) for sport and recreation, walking, observing wildlife, cycling and angling. However, these varied uses put pressure on the river and its surroundings. We need to plan and manage the use of this unique resource in sustainable ways so that future generations can enjoy it.

The River Ancholme can play a part in meeting many aspirations that form part of Sport England's vision to drive up participation in active recreation by at least 1% year on year. The river also provides a natural resource to increase participation and to encourage informal active recreation. By working in partnership we will be able to support other organisations to meet their own targets.

## Context



“Properly targeted, improvements to our waterways can make a contribution to improving the quality of life for those living in our more deprived communities along our waterways”

#### Environmental inequality

We know that people from deprived neighbourhoods are more likely to suffer poor health, worse air quality, more environmental crime and degraded public spaces.

Tackling issues of environmental inequality and social exclusion is complex and requires action by many different parties. However, properly targeted, improvements to our waterways can make a contribution to improving the quality of life for those living in our more deprived communities along our waterways.

The social benefits that can be gained from waterway regeneration are concisely summarised in the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities (AINA) publication *The Inland Waterways: Towards Greater Social Inclusion*. Undertaking actions outlined in this plan will contribute towards realising ours and AINA's vision to reducing inequality in deprived communities.

#### Biodiversity

In terms of biodiversity, the River Ancholme navigation is heavily modified by dredging and embankments. Nonetheless, areas along the river, such as between Castlethorpe and Broughton the *hard* engineering has been lessened by providing areas of rich shallow margins behind the stone. At Brandy Wharf we have employed soft-engineering approaches, using natural material rather than rock and steel for bank protection, where plants like reed can establish. These areas provide habitats for invertebrates, fish and birds.

The river is also a vital corridor for wildlife, linking fragmented habitats. The River Humber is an internationally protected site and maintains a large and varied bird population. The Humber Estuary is significant in that it is used regularly by 1% or more of some of Great Britain's wintering and breeding bird populations, such as avocet, bittern and hen harrier.

Over 20,000 waterbirds, including dark-bellied brent geese, golden plover and redshank regularly use this internationally protected site. It also is used regularly by migratory bird species, such as shelduck, knot and dunlin.

The interests of biodiversity and opportunities to enhance habitat for wildlife will form an integral part of our projects as we move forwards to carry out this plan.

#### Global warming

Global warming is likely to have an increasing effect upon climate. The severity will depend on the amount of greenhouse gases released into the atmosphere from now on, and how the climate system response. However, we are likely to experience:

- more frequent and dangerous extreme weather events
- heavier winter rainfall
- warmer summers

Warmer, drier and sunnier summers could benefit domestic summer tourism. But they could also result in low river flows hampering recreation and damaging wetlands and aquatic habitats. A reduction in dilution of effluents could cause poor water quality and increases the likelihood of harmful algal blooms. Heavier rainfall would increase the risk of flooding and make dangerous strong stream conditions more frequent.



# Implementing the plan

## Maintain

The revenue and capital programmes are focussed on maintaining and improving existing navigation assets. There are two locks and a variety of boat moorings ranging from 48 hour visitor moorings to annual leased moorings. At South Ferriby recent work has seen the new and improved timber, finger moorings installed, for use by sailing craft.

The precise level of investment in maintaining the existing infrastructure will, in part, be dependent on the prioritisation of available funding. Our assets are classified as being in either a 'good', 'fair' or 'poor' condition. Our immediate goal is to target our investment to improve the condition of all assets that are currently classified as being in a 'poor' condition to 'fair' or 'good'. The current range of asset condition on the River Ancholme navigation is – 'good' 47%, 'fair' 41% and 'poor' 12%.

We will adopt a risk based approach to achieve this target and by a structured programme of investment based on asset condition, level of use, cost of repair and smart methods of procurement, we will ensure optimal value for money is achieved.

## Improve

The Waterway Standards of the Association of Inland Navigation Authorities (AINA) have been adopted on our waterways as a way to address deficiencies in our provision of facilities. However, the River Ancholme has benefited from several improvement projects over the years including the Ancholme Partnership Initiative and more recently, support from the Lincolnshire Waterways Partnership, and as such the River Ancholme currently meets these standards.

We will encourage use of the River Ancholme, for all users, by providing publicity and information.



### Develop

A key element in the Government strategy *Waterways for Tomorrow* is the contribution the development of the waterway network can make to urban and rural regeneration. In encouraging a modern, integrated and sustainable approach to their use, we wish to maximise the opportunities the waterways offer for leisure and recreation; as a catalyst for rural regeneration; for education; and for freight transport.

These development initiatives include proposals to increase access to, and use of, our waterways. This will include initiatives to address our aims in relation to social inclusion and healthy outdoor recreation.

All the development initiatives are classified as non-statutory improvements and these aims will be achieved in partnership with others. There is a small budget available to these initiatives, but current funding is insufficient to deliver all of our goals.

“We wish to maximise the opportunities the waterways offer for leisure and recreation; as a catalyst for rural regeneration; for education; and for freight transport”

# Implementing the Plan

Future partnership work will therefore be focussed on developing projects and associated funding, designed to provide the multiple aims of different funding partners.

The River Ancholme catchment affords opportunities for regeneration and improved public access to our waterways. These opportunities fall broadly into one of two categories, either major regeneration projects or smaller scale enhancement or extension to existing recreational use of our waterways.

During the lifetime of this plan, we intend to develop a visionary proposal for South Ferriby to become a significant gateway between the River Ancholme, the River Humber and other close coastal ports.

Each year many aspirational projects are brought to our attention. Our level of support for such projects will depend on the relative costs and benefits of the project and on available resources and our focus will be on improving awareness and use of the River Ancholme. All projects in which we become involved will be plotted on the waterway development reach maps, **map numbers 02 to 04**. These maps will be updated on a regular basis and will be available on our website, which is [www.environment-agency.gov.uk](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk). We believe that this will provide a valuable update for partners and public alike, on the progress we are making achieving our targets.

The type of projects included on the aspirational maps cover any aspect of water based recreation and navigation. The following section of this report *Sport and Recreation* identifies examples of these projects and outlines our priorities for them over the next five years.

“The River Ancholme catchment affords opportunities for regeneration and improved public access to our waterways”





## Sport and recreation

The Ancholme Users Group is an active partnership of river users, working together to understand each others needs and aspirations for the river. This forum is considered to work well because all the users are local to the area, and includes not only recreational users, but businesses, public bodies and others. This reflects the diversity of the community and the interest in this natural resource.



### Rowing

Rowing is a significant recreational and sporting activity on the River Ancholme, notably at Brigg where there is an active club offering junior membership, tuition and a variety of competitive events.

On the reaches of the river we control and where the rowing takes place we will work with Brigg Rowing Club in support of competitive and recreational rowing. We will also seek to minimise potential conflict between rowers and other users of the river.

“Rowing is a significant recreational and sporting activity on the River Ancholme”

### Canoeing

The British Canoe Union (BCU) has an individual membership of over 25,000, 469 affiliated clubs and 145 approved centres. The BCU pays us a fee that allows each of its members to register a canoe. This is recouped from the year membership fees.

The upper reaches of the river lends itself to small boat use. Canoe access has been developed over recent years through the Lincolnshire Waterways Partnership with the provision of a landing stage at Bishopbridge, portage points at Harlam Hill Lock and a slipway at Brandy Wharf.

### Sailing

Sailing yachts typify the type of boating use at South Ferriby and the recently built slipway at Brandy Wharf is already encouraging small sailing dinghy use on the river.

South Ferriby benefits from a good tidal window, which allows around three hours of use, either side of high tide. From the river, many boats regularly visit Hull,

# Sport and Recreation

Grimsby, Goole and the continent. South Ferriby also welcomes many visiting boats each year from east coast ports and abroad.

The Humber Keel & Sloop sailing barges, Amy Howson and Comrade, moor at South Ferriby during the summer season, providing a link to our waterway heritage and an attractive visitor feature.

South Ferriby also offers a range of boating facilities, including a local boat builder and chandlery. In addition to these facilities, we also provide summer leased moorings.

“The development of the existing network provides an important opportunity to encourage people to enjoy the delights of our waterways”

## Angling

There are some 120,000 licensed anglers in the Anglian Region. Encouraging more people into fishing brings significant economic and social benefits. Angling can contribute to social inclusion, promote environmental awareness and deliver sustained reductions in crime and anti-social behaviour among young people. A national *Get Hooked on Fishing* scheme, supported by the police, specifically targets young people at risk of offending and has achieved:

- zero offending
- 80% reduction in truancy
- increased literacy and general education performance

Angling is also one of the most popular sports for people with disabilities.

We will work with our internal colleagues to fulfil the aspiration of the Environment Agency strategy for angling *Angling 2015*.

Scunthorpe & District Angling Association currently control the angling on the River Ancholme, for the Environment Agency.

The river is widely regarded as a high class coarse fishery attracting visiting anglers from surrounding

counties, including South Yorkshire. Winter match angling is particularly popular with a number of organised competitions.

Toft Newton Reservoir is a popular trout fishery offering boat and bank angling, including wheelchair access.

## Walking, cycling and horse riding

There is an extensive network of rights of way associated with the river; much of this activity takes place on Environment Agency land.

There are a number of circular footpaths based around Brigg and the entire length of the river has a public footpath running along one or other of the banks.

The development of the existing network provides an important opportunity to encourage people to enjoy the delights of our waterways, thereby contributing to our agenda to provide an improved quality of life by encouraging informal outdoor recreation.

We will seek to work with partners to increase the limited budget for this work.

## Heritage

The River Ancholme provides a richly textured heritage landscape, with a concentration of historic buildings and scheduled ancient monuments. The diversity and wealth of these heritage sites are key to the unique landscape character of the river.

There are seven listed bridges and Horkstow Bridge is of European importance. These bridges are all unique in character and design and originated from a design competition over a hundred years ago. Designs range from a mini suspension bridge to a variety of iron and stone structures.

Horkstow Bridge was designed by Sir John Renie who also designed South Ferriby Lock in 1848. South Ferriby Lock is a Scheduled Monument and still serves as a working sea lock today.

These sites, and others, provide a powerful reminder of the work and way of life of earlier generations and provide places of enjoyment for local people and visitors today.

Promoting the enjoyment of these areas and sites will form a key component of encouraging greater access to the river. Working with others, we will seek to enhance the leisure and tourism potential of the area.



## Visitor risk management

Visitor safety is paramount to us. We want visitors to the river to return home happy and satisfied with their experiences.

We have a legal and moral obligation to consider visitor safety, and protect them from unnecessary or unreasonable risk. Successful risk management demands a partnership between the manager of the waterway, the visitor and other groups (such as governing bodies of sport), recognising that each carries a share of the responsibility for safety, dependent on the type of activity and location.

Different types of river user have widely differing expectations: from canoeists seeking adventure, to parents looking for a place for their children to picnic and play without coming to harm. In guarding against these risks, we must take care to avoid implementing safety measures that conflict significantly with our access, recreation, landscape, heritage and environmental responsibilities. Nor should we take away people's sense of adventure and freedom.

**“Visitor safety is paramount to us. We want visitors to the river to return home happy and satisfied with their experiences”**



## Targets, monitoring and review

It is important to be able to judge over time how successful we are in meeting the plan's core aims to:

- improve and promote access and information for all users (on water and land);
- improve and maintain the river infrastructure and facilities and services for all users;
- contribute to enhanced biodiversity, heritage and landscape value in the waterway corridor;
- increase use of the river and its corridor.

We will judge our success in the following ways:

- the numbers and mix of people using the river;
- user satisfaction;
- achieving waterway standards;
- enhanced biodiversity, heritage and landscape value.

We will need to set up robust baseline data and measure changes. For boating, the number of craft registered provides a reliable measure. However, we will need to find ways to measure levels of participation in sport and recreation (for example the number of oarsmen, canoeists, walkers, anglers and cyclists.)

It would also be very valuable to set up a programme of research that measures user satisfaction and identifies the extent to which use is socially inclusive.



Our key indicators of success in maintaining the river's infrastructure and facilities will be the reduction of maintenance arrears and increased use through publicity and improved information. Advice is particularly sought on ways to measure enhanced biodiversity, heritage and landscape value in the waterway corridor. This could include areas of new riverside habitat created, and lengths of natural riverbank retained.

The following table, contains a summary of actions that we will be undertaking over the foreseeable future. Our next financial spending review with government is in 2008 and we will use this process as an opportunity to review this plan and to measure its effectiveness to deliver our actions. We will continue with the revised plan from 2008 and beyond.

“We will need to establish robust baseline data and measure changes”

Outcome	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/2011
Map areas of social need in relation to their proximity to navigable waterways and use this information to prioritise access projects in and around urban areas	<p>Within Waterway Plans, identify and map areas of social need</p> <p>Overlay this information with Environment Agency landholdings to prioritise access projects</p>	Provide a programme of targeted access improvements in urban and urban fringe areas	Provide a programme of targeted access improvements in urban and urban fringe areas	Provide a programme of targeted access improvements in urban and urban fringe areas	Provide a programme of targeted access improvements in urban and urban fringe areas
Health and well-being  Working with Sport England, we will continue to promote healthy lifestyles in the countryside	In conjunction with our Sports England partners and our National Office, we will actively support and conduct research into the health benefits for all; identifying the benefits and how they can be achieved	In conjunction with our Sports England partners and our National Office, we will actively support and conduct research into the health benefits for all; identifying the benefits and how they can be achieved	In conjunction with our Sports England partners and our National Office, we will actively support and conduct research into the health benefits for all; identifying the benefits and how they can be achieved	In conjunction with our Sports England partners and our National Office, we will actively support and conduct research into the health benefits for all; identifying the benefits and how they can be achieved	In conjunction with our Sports England partners and our National Office, we will actively support and conduct research into the health benefits for all; identifying the benefits and how they can be achieved
Improved information so that people with disabilities are able to make an informed decision about suitability of access		Undertake a disability audit for all relevant Environment Agency sites with public access	Carry out findings from disability audit	Carry out findings from disability audit	Carry out findings from disability audit

Outcome	2006/07	2007/08
Enhance biodiversity on our waterway	<p>Look for opportunities for wildlife enhancements in the work we are doing for both capital and revenue works</p> <p>Develop recreation honey pot sites away from conservation sensitive areas</p>	<p>Look for opportunities for wildlife enhancements in the work we are doing for both capital and revenue works</p> <p>Develop recreation honey pot sites away from conservation sensitive areas</p>
<p>Heritage</p> <p>Where appropriate, improve awareness of heritage sites along our waterways</p>	<p>Ensure heritage features are included in River Guides, relevant websites, and interpretation boards and any other literature developed with partners</p> <p>Manage Environment Agency land, buildings and structures of heritage interest, such as locks and bridges, in harmony with their setting, design, materials and construction methods</p>	<p>Ensure heritage features are included in River Guides, relevant websites, and interpretation boards and any other literature developed with partners</p> <p>Manage Environment Agency land, buildings and structures of heritage interest, such as locks and bridges, in harmony with their setting, design, materials and construction methods</p> <p>Develop heritage trails with partners</p>

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**2008/09****2009/10****2010/2011**

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# Targets, monitoring and review

Outcome	2006/07	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/2011
Ensure that management and improvements to the navigation take account of any impact of climate change	For high flows, ensure we provide strong stream advice to our users	For high flows, ensure we provide strong stream advice to our users	For high flows, ensure we provide strong stream advice to our users	For high flows, ensure we provide strong stream advice to our users	For high flows, ensure we provide strong stream advice to our users
	For low flows, ensure locks are maintained as efficient structures to reduce leakage	For low flows, ensure locks are maintained as efficient structures to reduce leakage	For low flows, ensure locks are maintained as efficient structures to reduce leakage	For low flows, ensure locks are maintained as efficient structures to reduce leakage	For low flows, ensure locks are maintained as efficient structures to reduce leakage
Increase the percentage number of assets categorised as being in fair or good condition from 88% to 95%	Increase the number of waterways assets in a good or fair condition from 88% to 90%	Increase the number of waterways assets in a good or fair condition from 90% to 92%	Increase the number of waterways assets in a good or fair condition from 92% to 94%	Increase the number of waterways assets in a good or fair condition from 94% to 95%	
Operation Public Safety (OPuS)	Provide an ongoing programme of inspections and carry out remedial work arising from inspections	Provide an ongoing programme of inspections and carry out remedial work arising from inspections	Provide an ongoing programme of inspections and carry out remedial work arising from inspections	Provide an ongoing programme of inspections and carry out remedial work arising from inspections	Provide an ongoing programme of inspections and carry out remedial work arising from inspections

Outcome	2006/07	2007/08
With others, promote sport and recreation, both on and by the water, to increase awareness and use of our waterways for recreational use	Seek positive media coverage to raise the profile of opportunities on the river and promotional campaigns in national and regional press	Seek positive media coverage to raise the profile of opportunities on the river and promotional campaigns in national and regional press
	Support and/or attend national, regional and local shows, events or exhibitions to promote our waterways	Support and/or attend national, regional and local shows, events or exhibitions to promote our waterways
	Promote navigation and recreation activities, on and by the river, particularly in urban areas	Promote navigation and recreation activities, on and by the river, particularly in urban areas
	Produce and promote visitor guides to our waterways	Produce and promote visitor guides to our waterways
	Provide accurate and up to date information about sport and recreation opportunities on the river	Provide accurate and up to date information about sport and recreation opportunities on the river
	Improve signage and visitor information at key locations	Improve signage and visitor information at key locations

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**2008/09****2009/10****2010/2011**

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Seek positive media coverage to raise the profile of opportunities on the river and promotional campaigns in national and regional press

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Improve signage and visitor information at key locations

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