

2.3.8 Access to the Landscape

One of the key challenges we face in our landscape is that of access. The current access opportunities are the result of generations of influence and change and as such do not necessarily provide a well-connected landscape. Whilst access by road is fairly good, access through public transport or via sustainable travel is poorly provisioned, fragmented and uncoordinated. The following section provides a summary appraisal of access and infrastructure across the Trent Valley.



Cycling in Alrewas (Aimee L. Booth)

Road access



Busy traffic on the A38 trunk road (Aimee L. Booth)

Road access is in general very good across the landscape, with main roads following the river valleys, so much so that roads actually form a significant intrusion in the landscape and a major barrier to access by other means, especially in the A38 and A50 corridors. Car parking provision is not a major problem, and further provision would not be in keeping with the aesthetics or habitats of the landscape

that visitors wish to see. Increased visiting by car would also create congestion in parts of the landscape and have a wider environmental cost. The development and promotion of alternative, sustainable access would enhance the environment of the landscape, reduce the environmental footprint of tourism in the region, and make access more inclusive.

River crossings

The river is a barrier to access as well as a landscape focus. The lack of river crossings is most pronounced for those on foot, pedal cycle or horseback, and is a significant factor limiting access within the landscape. Some crossing points have

even been lost, although National Cycle Network Route 6 (the Cloud Trail) now crosses the river on a disused railway line, and some proposed developments could lead to new bridges, such as the planned housing at Drakelow, opposite Branston (south-west Burton).



Bridge over the River Trent (Nick Mott)

Railway access

The railway network also largely follows the river valleys, but has lower connectivity, in that services are focussed on major urban centres rather than providing local connections. Journeys within the landscape often require interchange outside the area and create protracted journeys.

into the landscape and then onward by other means, whether bus, cycle, foot or taxi. The quality of this interchange varies considerably.

Most stations in or close to the landscape are therefore interchange points for travel

The proposed HS2 route will cut through the south-western section of the landscape for around 6km, but will not result in the development of any new train stations within the vicinity of the landscape.



Railway network that crosses the landscape (Aimee L. Booth)

Bus access

Bus services are sparse given the density of towns and villages in the area. In particular, places in the Needwood area, between the Trent and Dove valleys, are connected to Uttoxeter and Burton by a regular bus service, but not the Trent Valley Landscape closer to them, nor indeed their nearest railway stations.

Sunday is the day of the week with the poorest service; the network is smaller and services are less frequent. A bus every hour is a reasonable rural service, but Sunday services are frequently no better than every two hours, where they exist.



Buses serving the towns and villages of the Trent Valley (*The Landscape Partnership*)



Busy Sunday at Fradley (*Waterway Images*)

Cycle access

There are National Cycle Network and other promoted routes in the area, which provide a degree of strategic access and in some cases penetration of the landscape, but access to the river, canal and attractions depends upon local links and the availability of cycle parking.

Parking for cycles is sparsely provided in the landscape and, whilst informal parking

may be available (e.g. fences and railings), this is not knowable in advance and may not be appropriate.

The canal towpath is available to cyclists in part, but not consistently. The towpath tends to be narrow, difficult to negotiate under bridges, for many disconcertingly close to the water, and potentially impeded by boat-related and angling activities.



Cycling along the canal (*Canal and River Trust*)

Pedestrian access

Walking is the essential form of transport for exploring the landscape, even if only from a car park. Informal access to the landscape on foot, and access to specific attractions, is limited by the relatively sparse Public Rights of Way (PRoW) network in the landscape itself. This is doubtless a result of the landscape being

essentially the floodplain of meandering rivers, with guaranteed dry routes rare. The lack of river crossing also means that the smaller roads in the landscape are more heavily trafficked than they might otherwise be, further limiting foot access. PRoW signage in the landscape also appears to be highly variable (The Landscape Partnership, 2018).



Finger posts showing the way in Alrewas (*Aimee L. Booth*)

Access from main urban centres

The main transport routes through the landscape are designed to carry people quickly through to other destinations; this landscape is not the intended destination. Map 25 shows the location of key infrastructure routes through the landscape. This leaves people with the option of either choosing the easiest route into the landscape and exploring from there, or taking a roundabout route to reach their desired destination.

A response to this could also be twofold:

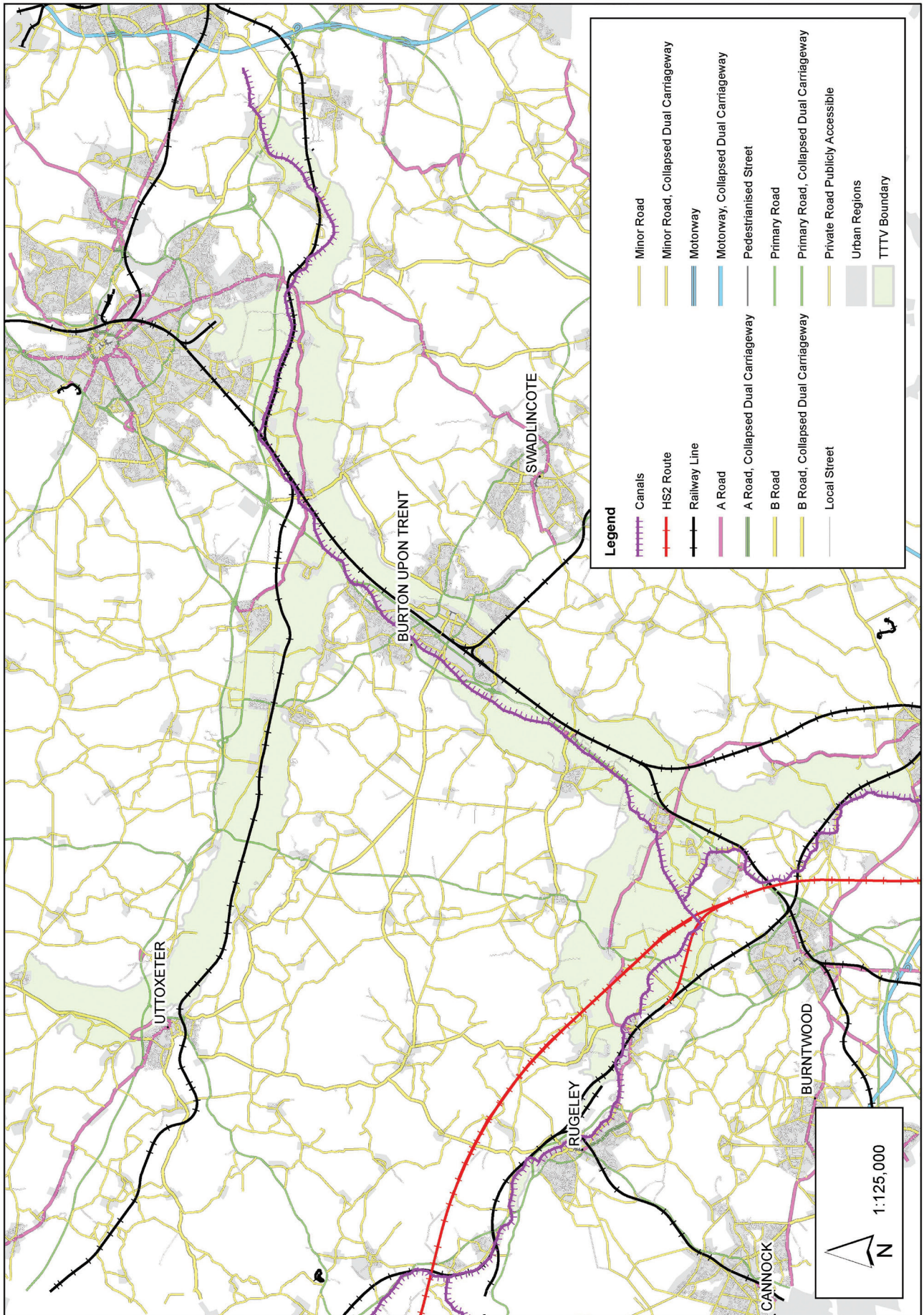
- exploit well-connected points of access as honeypots; and
- develop better links around and within the landscape.

The latter would logically prioritise foot, cycle and bus links (as the landscape is already dominated by motor traffic), but also seek to develop better rail connectivity where appropriate and where opportunities arise (The Landscape Partnership, 2018). The priority of our partnership is to improve connectivity to the landscape via sustainable travel with a particular focus on walking and cycling. Improved signage and infrastructure for cycles will improve some of the gaps

in the cycle network connecting the landscape. The creation of a long-distance footpath, with associated circular routes and spurs, provides an opportunity to connect visitors sustainably with the landscape over a significant distance, thereby reducing the impact of poor road and rail connections. This will improve access for local residents but will also increase access for visitors, especially those using the canal as a route into the landscape due to the close ties between the two.

However, whilst improving access to the landscape is important and is a recurring theme, it must be acknowledged that improved access to sensitive sites can have a detrimental effect. Increased visitor numbers to a site of cultural or natural significance can result in degradation of that site, whilst other sites can be sensitive to changes in access, even if visitor numbers are not high, for example ground nesting birds can be disturbed by dog walkers. It is therefore essential to ensure that access is given for the right reasons and carefully managed to ensure that the heritage we most wish to preserve is not lost in our efforts to showcase our landscape.

Map 25. Key infrastructure routes across the Transforming the Trent Valley landscape



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2.3.9 Our Audience

Our landscape is home to diverse communities and a diverse population which enriches our landscape on a human level. By better understanding the mix of people that make up our population, we can ensure that we reach a broad range of backgrounds, cultures, beliefs and interests.

Background

The landscape is not aligned to any one community; rather it spans a number of different local communities who are connected by a river valley but are rich in their diversity of background and outlook. The area includes urban, urban fringe and rural areas. Much of

the landscape, as highlighted above, is physically cut off by major roads and rail infrastructure, but is connected by the historical canals, the scenic rivers and the network of walking and cycle routes. The valley offers many opportunities for locals and visitors, despite being well developed by industry and housing, and with many more developments in the pipeline. Furthermore, there are large-scale mineral extraction operations on-going. Understanding our communities is therefore essential when planning projects that will connect them with accessible green open space to enjoy peace and tranquillity (Waymark, 2018).

Target Audiences

Table 2. Primary audiences that the projects will aim to reach throughout the delivery of the scheme

Audience	Details
Visitors	Both local visitors and people who have travelled from further afield.
Young people	Particularly those not currently in education or training.
Families with young children	Particularly those not currently engaging with the landscape
Schools	Principally primary schools, but looking at the curriculum requirements of all age groups.
Special Educational Needs and Disability (SEND) children and vulnerable adults	Working with specialist groups and schools
Elderly	Including retired individuals.
Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)	Particularly those not currently engaging with the landscape.
Social Deprivation groups	With a particular focus on inner Burton areas.
Individuals with restricted mobility	To be found throughout the area
Health disadvantaged	With a focus on mental health and well-being.
Socially and economically deprived	Including those with limited access to transport; those with lower income.

Additional beneficiaries

Table 3. Further audiences who will benefit from the projects throughout the delivery of the scheme

Audience	Details
Community groups and local interest groups	There has been a lot of interest from local community groups in becoming involved in the projects. The groups are diverse in reach and interest.
Local tourism businesses	An economic assessment of the Trent Valley Way has determined a likely positive impact on local tourism businesses along its route.
Academics/specialists	Research will inform academic institutions and there has been interest from local students.

User groups, origins and needs

The 2011 Census data, for the TTTV area and roughly 10 km around it, reveal a number of points of relevance to visitor demographics and access, including wards of particular interest for specialist outreach work. Information relating to the scheme area extracted from the Census information can be found in the Access and Visitor Audit undertaken by The Landscape Partnership in February 2018.

Age

Age distribution is fairly uniform across the Census sample area, with an overall average age of 39.9 years. The data does show an above average proportion of people in the 20-30 age groups in wards in Burton-upon-Trent, which will now be registering in the 30-44 age group, assuming no significant demographic changes since 2011. Younger age groups in those wards do not stand out (The Landscape Partnership, 2018).

Car ownership

The percentage of households with no cars or vans is a proxy for effective car ownership levels, of more use than the number of cars per household or per head of population. Cars may be shared by drivers within households, other household members are frequently driven by the driver(s), and the availability

of a car can be expected to be a very strong influence on its use for leisure trips in particular. Those without cars are excluded from access to many leisure destinations and, furthermore, areas with low car ownership are therefore likely to be more productive in terms of promoting non-car access to a visitor attraction, other things being equal (The Landscape Partnership, 2018).

Within the landscape area, wards within Burton-upon-Trent feature strongly as locations with a high percentage of households without cars. Burton, Shobnall and Eton Park in particular with 38.6%, 38% and 32.1% respectively.

Employment levels and social grade (disposable income)

Levels of employment and “approximated social grade” can serve as a proxy for disposable income, which could be used in leisure pursuits, tourism, eating out, etc. Areas with low and high numbers of households in the top socio-economic grades, A and B, can therefore stand as rough proxies for low and high levels of disposable income respectively. This is useful in targeting areas with 1) low levels of disposable income (low A and B), for social inclusion outreach, and 2) those with high levels of disposable income (high A and B), for higher-end tourism

audience development (The Landscape Partnership, 2018).

Within the landscape, the Burton-upon-Trent ward of Shobnall has low levels of socio-economic grades A and B with only 9.7% of persons in that grade, compared to Rolleston-on-Dove (37.6%) to the north and Needwood (36%) to the south.

Ethnicity, language and religion

People's ethnic background can affect their propensity for leisure travel in a variety of ways. The following general points can be made (Natural England, 2005; Black Environment Network, 2003):

- Immigrant communities have tended to be concentrated in urban areas and can feel that the countryside is distant, expensive to reach and in general not for them.
- In a connected fashion, there may be a perception that people from ethnic minorities would be made less welcome in the countryside, with a real fear of discrimination.
- Without a habit of visiting the countryside, practical barriers are also present, including cost and a lack of knowledge of the countryside itself, what clothing is appropriate, about what to expect there, and about transport links (including Public Rights of Way).
- Further barriers exist in terms of language (both for those whose knowledge of English is not developed and in terms of language not encountered in urban contexts) and a lack of culturally-appropriate facilities.
- Some groups have particular expectations in relation to travel and activities undertaken by women, such that unaccompanied travel becomes difficult and modes of dress appropriate to countryside and other leisure activities are difficult to reconcile with modesty needs.

- People of some backgrounds are more likely to wish to visit the countryside in groups rather than as individuals, couples or small families, whether because of a need for male accompaniment or a cultural preference for more social gatherings rather than the more 'Western' idea of 'getting away from it all'.
- Some immigrant groups have social attitudes that privilege having achieved certain socio-economic status, marked by such things as car ownership, which has a double impact: a lower propensity to use public transport and a lower desire to undertake one of the commonest countryside activities: walking (The Landscape Partnership, 2018).

Within the landscape, Burton-upon-Trent wards have lower levels of white ethnicity compared to elsewhere in the landscape with Eton Park (74.2% white ethnicity) Shobnall (66.4% white ethnicity) and Anglesey (64.5% white ethnicity) being of particular note.

The Census data allow some analysis of ethnic and cultural background in the landscape area. Overall levels of ethnic minority populations can be gauged by identifying wards with relatively low levels of white ethnicity (as illustrated above). The largest ethnic minority group per se is people of Asian background, principally the Indian sub-continent, with an emphasis on Pakistan. People of black ethnicity are in much lower numbers, but follow closely the distribution of Asian populations in this landscape.

Similarly, the largest professed non-Christian religion in the Census sample is Islam, which has specific (although variable) modesty requirements and expectations of women. Similar can be true of Sikh culture, the next largest religious affiliation given in the landscape (The Landscape Partnership, 2018).

Gender and sexuality

Whilst there are particular things to consider in welcoming women visitors from some cultures, particularly their being alone in the presence of unrelated men, there is also the issue of the perception of risk and fear of discrimination. Different people experience different places and situations as threatening, and the differences are not necessarily gender-specific.

It can be the attitudes of staff that are a source of discomfort, perhaps especially for LGBT people. Diversity awareness training for staff is valuable in overcoming difficulties, which may be to do with unfamiliarity rather than malice (The Landscape Partnership, 2018).



Access routes for all (Ade Clarke @ClarkePictures)

Disability

People with long-term illness or disability which limits their day-to-day activities show fairly evenly spread around the scheme area, averaging 18.6% of the population.

Disabilities affect access in a variety of ways:

- Ambulatory disabilities are perhaps the most obvious, ranging from difficulty walking very far and managing steps, to use of a wheelchair.
- Visual disabilities are a spectrum; relatively few people are completely blind.
- Auditory disabilities are subtler, in that they are less easy to spot in visitors and affect the visitor's experience in different ways.
- Learning or cognitive disabilities are also diverse. It is perhaps here that staff awareness training can pay most dividends.

It is clear that there are a number of factors that influence the makeup of user groups across the landscape. It will be a challenge to the scheme to ensure that there is a representative audience engaged in our activities. Clearly, whilst a large part of this is creating interesting, informative and appropriate projects that are welcomed by the communities, it is also incumbent on the partnership to ensure communication reaches those communities in the correct way that addresses the variety of barriers that otherwise prevent access to the Trent Valley landscape.

2.3.10 Engaging our Audience

Our communities are diverse and as such our approach should match this diversity. Clearly, people care about the landscape: the river, the open space and the built heritage; but they feel disempowered and disconnected. Over time this risks leading to a general disinterest in a landscape they have little connection to. We need to encourage the interest that exists and build upon existing initiatives. Many local residents have an interest in the history as demonstrated by the number of local historians and local history groups. Individuals have expressed interest in active participation and volunteering-opportunity and encouragement is only required. Whilst very few people stated an out-right disinterest in their local environment, people have started to turn their backs on the river by focusing on negative aspects. We cannot tackle every problem, but we can celebrate what is good and help people to help themselves.

The shape of the landscape area and type of region is the obvious starting point when considering interpretation and community engagement.

The landscape suits the work proposed at landscape level and ties in perfectly with the work of neighbouring landscape scale projects including the Churnet Valley Living Landscape, The Tame Valley Wetlands and South West Peak.

Much of the landscape is physically cut off by major roads and rail infrastructure. The valley is well used and developed by industry and housing, and many more developments are in the pipeline. Furthermore, there are large-scale mineral extraction operations on-going. This all means that people have to work harder to find accessible green open space to enjoy peace and tranquillity (Waymark, 2018).

Community

The Transforming the Trent Valley landscape does not align itself to any one community; rather it spans a number of different local communities. The area includes urban, urban fringe and rural areas. There are a few very keen volunteers who are active on their local patch. The strength and coverage of these types of local groups should be assessed and identify how best they could be supported, and possibly be better interconnected (Waymark, 2018).

The outputs from the Community Conversations, facilitated by Icarus, highlight the high level of interest in cultural and natural heritage, and access to it, at a local level. There has been a consistent desire, across the six conversations, for greater community involvement. Of particular interest is the creation of volunteering opportunities to be directly involved in projects, the establishment of local 'friends of' groups and for existing community groups (with a notable bias towards local history groups) to be consulted and involved in decision making. It is clear that there is a wealth of knowledge across the landscape; the challenge will be to utilise this resource in an effort to create connections and ties between the partnership and the communities and avoid the common pitfalls of 'reinventing the wheel'.

Existing interpretation

Much of the installed interpretation in the project area, with the exception of the National Forest, and to some degree the Burton Washlands, is inconsistent in its message, outdated and, in many instances, poorly maintained.

Signage

The Access and Visitor Audit undertaken by The Landscape Partnership (2018) has highlighted a number of issues with the signage across the landscape and suggested where improvements can be made.

Sites across the Landscape are often poorly sign-posted, unless in very close proximity. For example, the Washlands are ideally located for informal recreation for people across Burton, but also from further afield, given its proximity to bus routes, the National Cycle Network and car parking. However, signage to the Washlands is almost non-existent and, unless someone has come in from across the river (or from the Burton Bridge access

route), the Washlands are effectively hidden. Similarly, the Willington Gravel Pits, a beautiful reserve overlooking former gravel workings with stunning natural heritage and an appeal to walkers, nature enthusiasts or those looking for peace and tranquillity, is virtually invisible, despite walking access from the villages of Repton and Willington.

The canal network remains a hidden gem in the Landscape, appearing briefly under a bridge or as a line of narrow boats across the valley. To come upon a ramp or steps down to the towpath on a busy road in Burton or Rugeley, or even at Wolseley Bridge, is like catching a glimpse into another world. This 'magical' aspect of the canals is a key part of their charm and could be built on by careful marketing and signage, without ruining the effect.

Signage needs to be clear and unambiguous; learning or cognitive disabilities are diverse and clear, legible routes help, as does clear language in signage and interpretation.



Waymarking walks near the River Trent (Aimee L. Booth)

2.3.11 Interpretative Themes

A set of three interpretative 'narratives' have emerged to help us to share our knowledge of the landscape, disseminate information about the scheme and be consistent with our messages to communities about the Transforming the Trent Valley landscape. These three narratives have been developed in partnership with Waymark and enable us to reach our different audiences.

Landscape Evolution

This narrative explores the heritage of the river both culturally and naturally. This is not a static river landscape but one that has changed and will continue to change. We can speculate on what the landscape looked like in the past and what it may look like in the future.

Stories will be based on geology, pre-history, industrial heritage, land use and the evolving landscape. The importance of sustainability and ecosystem services will be incorporated.



Alrewas Church (Aimee L. Booth)

The Role of the River

This narrative looks at the river's ability to both connect and divide:

The River as a Connecting Corridor: the growth of industry, its use in transport and how that has influenced the landscape today.

River Crossings and Divides: the importance of settlement locations, the influence on place names and the World War II stop line.

RandR

Recovery, restoration, rest, recuperation, regeneration.

There will be a focus on what we are doing to benefit the landscape and what the landscape can do for us. We are helping the river and its floodplain to recover, we are restoring features and assets that have suffered neglect, we are allowing the river valley to recuperate and regenerate. In return the landscape can help individuals mentally and physically to recover, rest, recuperate and regenerate.

This narrative explores the vision for the restoration and recovery of this wetland landscape, vital for wildlife, habitats, recreation and enjoyment.

The three interpretative narratives allow flexibility to explore what are often seen as contradicting messages and demonstrate how people, industry, wildlife and culture can coexist side-by-side.

2.4 Consultation

Understanding how people perceive and use our landscape, who they are and who they are not, will enable us to develop projects that fulfil a need, create positive change and reach a wide audience. By engaging with individuals, schools and community groups, we are encouraging people to have a voice and to be directly involved in the development of our scheme.

Consultation and engagement has been undertaken in three distinct strategies:

1. Information about the scheme has been disseminated to provide interested parties with detail about the scheme and the proposed projects that will be taken forward. There has been opportunity for the interested parties to then comment or seek further information. Audiences have been actively engaged to support or endorse the scheme.
2. Consultation activities have been undertaken to directly seek the ideas and opinions of various audiences. This information is then used to inform projects of the needs and to provide direction for development.
3. High quality consultation has been undertaken through a facilitated public dialogue project. The emphasis was on a qualitative approach involving a participatory dialogue with key individuals and communities to determine options, choices and preferences. The approach steered away from traditional consultation by taking a bottom-up approach without seeking endorsement for a pre-determined position.

2.4.1 Public dialogue

The Communities of Burton-upon-Trent, Dove Valley, Repton and Willington, the A38 Corridor, Alrewas and Kings Bromley, and Tamworth were engaged in local discussions to gain different perspectives formed by the varied challenges and opportunities presented by these varied locations across the Trent Valley. In total 103 individuals and 15 'technical experts' (those involved or with knowledge of the scheme) participated.

These representative locations incorporated large towns, villages and hamlets, areas affected by quarrying, large infrastructure challenges or development, places distinctly rural in character and areas marked by industry; all locations linked by their connection to the Trent Valley and the Washlands.

Local people have a unique insight into their area, their green and blue spaces, their cultural heritage and the open spaces, buildings and sites that they use. The Community Conversations process was designed to harness this insight and knowledge, with local people working alongside professionals from the partnership organisations in a way that brought their areas of knowledge together and gave scope for creative thinking about the issues that exist (Icarus, 2018).

Three key objectives of the Community Conversations were achieved during four, two-hour sessions held at two weekly intervals during the evening. Participants were required to attend all four sessions in the series. The objectives were: identify a vision for the area, examine the current situation, and identify key projects that will move the current situation forward towards achieving the vision.

Local Visions for Local Communities

Following the process, five vision statements were created by communities in each location (with the exception of Tamworth). This was a highly considered activity and consequently has given rise to five statements that demonstrate the most significant attributes best valued by that community. These incorporated a number of common themes including a space for everyone (communities, visitors, people); ability to enjoy the outdoors (recreation, relaxation and culture); preserving the history and the heritage; wildlife and nature rich; a healthy natural environment; and accessible to all.

Current situation

Participants were asked to think about the current situation for the river and the valley. Across the variety of comments there was some clear 'common ground'.

Wildlife conservation – recognition of the value of the natural environment; protecting and enhancing it; interpreting it and promoting wider understanding.

Access and recreation – a desire for improved access, and maintaining what exists, for local people and visitors, especially those with disabilities or limited mobility; promoting access and amenities.

Cultural heritage – valuing and respecting our heritage; recognising the knowledge and expertise of individuals; retaining the rural character of the area in the face of development pressures.

Productive use of the landscape – recognising the flood management role of the landscape; water quality improvements and associated habitat benefits; the importance of agriculture for the landscape.

Follow up

Following the conclusion of the six Community Conversations, a final event was held in Burton-upon-Trent, due to its central location in the landscape, to bring participants from across the landscape together to feedback on the outcomes of the conversations and how they had informed the scheme. Twenty individuals attended this event.

Support for the scheme has remained enthusiastic, although there remain topics of discussion that are beyond the scope of this landscape partnership scheme. For instance, the issue of road traffic management and maintenance of roadside verges is important to a number of the communities. However, we are keen to engage with the local community and emphasise that this scheme should be seen as an initial step and that, whilst many issues are beyond the scope of this scheme, we are represented by key decision makers in the landscape who can feed comments back to their respective organisations. Additionally, the wealth of information that has been gathered through the development phase will be made available to communities intending to expand on the work started by Transforming the Trent Valley. This is all part of strengthening the scheme in the landscape and securing a legacy for the future.

At the conclusion of this event we asked the participants to complete a postcard stating why they supported the scheme and what the main change they would like the scheme to bring about was. Table 4 below shows the responses that were given.

Table 4. Responses given by participants of the final Community Conversation event providing feedback on their views about the scheme.

Community Conversation attended	I support TTTV because...	The main change I would like TTTV to bring about is...
Burton	It is an excellent opportunity to create change in the area	An awareness of wider issues that can be addressed by key decision makers.
Burton	I'm a local councillor	Regeneration of Burton via projects linking the town centre to the community and the Washlands.
Burton	It provides so many benefits for so many different sections of the local community	Greater awareness of all that the local river environment has to offer.
Burton	The landscape and habitat linking will have a tremendous positive effect on the area	A lot of talk about access but all car focused (A38 corridor title did not help) – the scheme could help to integrate, improve bus / train links as well as walking / cycling.
Branston	It has the possibility to improve the management and development of both wild and man-made environment	Better cohesive management and co-ordination of funding and voluntary bodies in the interests of all.
A38 corridor	This is such an important landscape – it needs to be known about and loved more!	More community engagement in the valley in future – get people involved!
Final meeting	I would like to improve the quality of the TTTV area for both communities and the environment	Increased community engagement in the area, with greater use.
A38 corridor	I care about the environment, nature and my community	True, safe access to the whole of the Trent Valley Way and its beauty.
Branston	It will be good for the local environment	Wildlife development and community involvement.
Repton / Willington	I recognise their enthusiasm to deliver the project	Improved pathways (pedestrian and cycle) in Repton / Willington area around the Trent.
A38 corridor	There are environmental and nature conservation issues that need addressing	Wilding and protecting the nature of the area.
Dove Valley	I live in, work in and play in the Trent Valley and enjoy the natural environment and care about its future	An improvement in natural heritage locally by tackling invasive species and preserving native black poplar trees.

Barton / Walton	It is fantastic project to be part of	More and better access.
	More and better access	Please don't just consider bikers, remember the disabled.
Alrewas	Of the potential to improve an area devastated by quarrying	A continuous walking and cycling route along the Trent Valley
Burton	Aiming to improve river area	More leisure use of regatta field area of Washlands, Burton
Burton	Partnership working to support better access to wildlife and cultural heritage, ensuring that our environment is safeguarded for the future	More diverse wildlife in an area easy to access. Burton specifically, Washlands needs to be heart of Burton
Dove and Willington	I want to see the Trent Valley thrive and be an asset, a re-wilded landscape	The river to be a wildlife wonderland
Branston	I see the Trent Valley as under threat	Further protection for the natural and cultural heritage of the Trent Valley
Branston	I want funded projects to improve accessibility	Improve accessibility particularly cycling and walking – separated from other traffic



Postcards completed by participants of the final Community Conversation event in Burton-upon-Trent (Icarus)

2.4.2 Wider Consultation

Wider consultation was undertaken of the general public who live, work and visit in the landscape. This was undertaken as an open survey on both Survey Monkey and Facebook, promoted via social media outlets, news releases, a newsletter and an existing network of contacts; and through face-to-face activities at a shopping centre in Burton-upon-Trent and at a Makers Market in Mercia Marina. A total of 136 people were engaged.

The results show that 36% of respondents visit the river daily or weekly, whilst 17% stated that they visited hardly ever or never. More than half of the people questioned responded that they felt the river was extremely important to them, whilst only 9% felt that it was unimportant to them.

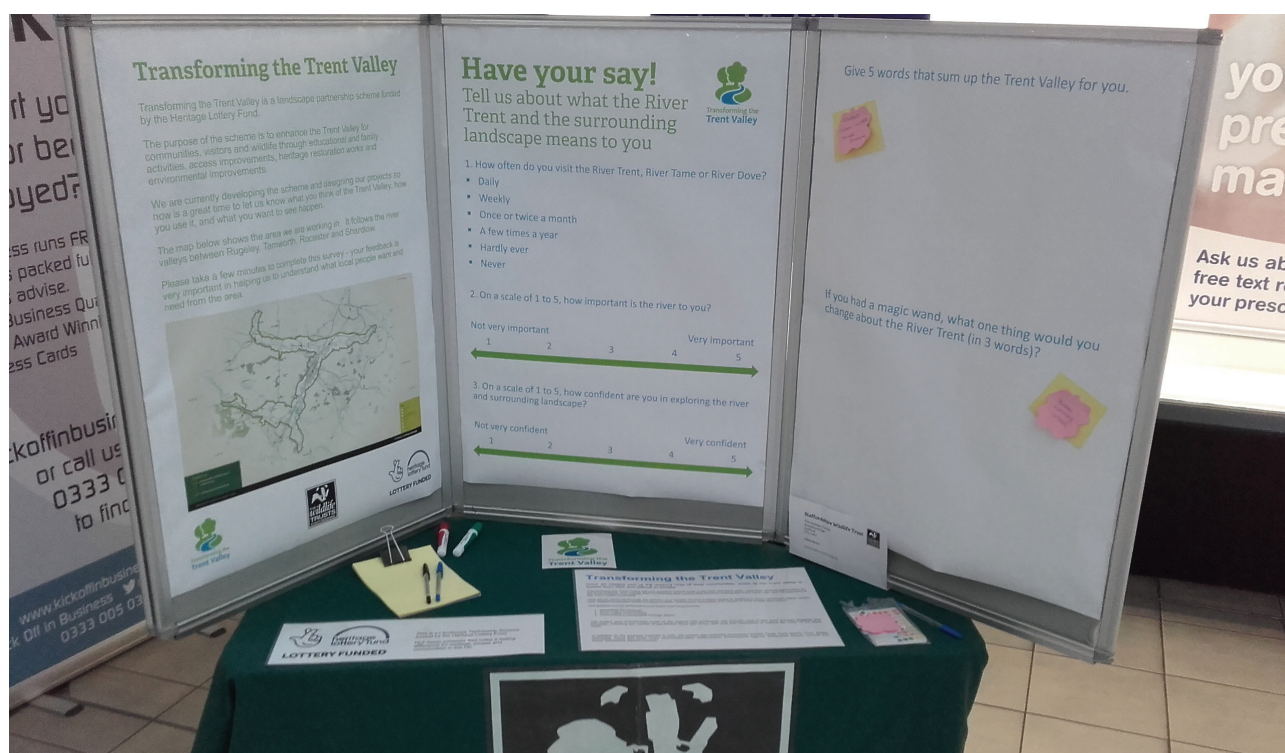
However, when asked how confident they felt exploring the river and its surrounding landscape the response was very mixed with 22% of people feeling unconfident exploring the landscape and only 28% stating that they felt very confident.

The majority of people (76%) expressed that they would like to become involved with improving their river and

surrounding landscape, with only 8% indicating that they were not interested and 11% saying they were unsure.

The survey also highlighted how people most commonly found out what was happening in their local area, with most people relying on social media, whilst the more traditional forms (newspapers and noticeboards) are falling out of favour.

It is clear that communities feel a connection to their river and their landscape, but there is a mixed response to how confident individuals feel about exploring their environment. There is a drive to be involved and take ownership, and it can be argued that it is opportunity that is lacking in providing people with the ability to become custodians of their local areas. The scheme will provide the means for inspiring individuals to volunteer time and an aim to create sustainable communities that will continue the good work once the funding has expired. Engaging these communities will require time and effort, utilising a variety of tactics to reach a varied audience. Social media is clearly an important tool, enabling us to provide succinct information to a wide audience.



Community Consultation in Burton (Staffordshire Wildlife Trust)