

# Upper Colne Valley Integrated Management Plan

## Executive Summary

### Introduction

The Upper Colne Valley is set at the junction between the South Pennines and the Dark Peak and lies above the small Pennine town of Marsden. It is a landscape of high moorland, dry stone walls, hay meadows, gritstone hamlets and reservoirs. At first glance the landscape has changed little over the years, with the Valley used as a regular location for film and television productions. The landscape has however been deteriorating for at least a century and times are now changing faster than ever, making it impossible to predict with certainty what the eventual outcome will be. To stand back and let market forces shape the future would surrender this special landscape to a less than certain outcome. What is certain is that rural communities, wildlife, traditional landscapes and informal recreation interests would suffer.

*Notes - Map showing the location of the Upper Colne Valley and map of the Upper Colne Valley*

### Background

The National Trust owns and manages Marsden Moor Estate. The Trust realised that in order to make a real impact, there was a need to work in partnership with the other agencies and landowners in the Valley. The Trust therefore took the imaginative step of inviting them to join them as partners in the Upper Colne Valley Project. The purpose of the Project was to produce an Integrated Management Plan for this small, but significant area of Yorkshire. The Plan would be delivered by means of a work programme, invaluable for drawing in the external money needed to turn around the fortunes of the Valley.

### Outputs

- Provide an overview of the state of the countryside in the Upper Colne Valley
- Assess ongoing projects
- Identify key strengths and weaknesses
- Highlight possible actions.
- Propose a costed work programme

### Good Practice

#### The National Trust

The National Trust carries out an extensive programme of moorland restoration and management on the Marsden Moor Estate. The Trust has considerable expertise in the management of upland environments, achieved by managing a network of such sites throughout the country. The Trust were however concerned that the Estate was being managed in isolation to the rest of the Upper Colne Valley and instigated the production of this Integrated Management Plan.

### Meltham Shoot

Meltham shoot is a small syndicate-run shoot, which has effectively improved an area of moorland for field sports and wildlife conservation. The site demonstrates what can be done with the help of ESA payments and many hours of voluntary work. The site yields good Grouse bags every year but also has a diversity of habitats and bird species breeding on it. Heather cover has been increased substantially over the past 20 years and the number of Grouse has increased with it.

### The Peak District National Park Authority

The Peak District National Park Authority is leading the Moors for the Future project, which will promote understanding of the moors throughout the National Park and create opportunities for more people to enjoy their special qualities. The Heritage Lottery Fund awarded £3.1 million towards the project and a further £1.6 million is coming from project partners. Implementation started in February 2003. The lottery grant, alongside the funding from partners, will enable restoration of more than 300 hectares of moorland damaged by fires, repairing the scars of over 19 km of eroded paths as well as finding ways to reduce the disturbance to wildlife across sensitive sites. There will be education projects and a 'Moor Care' initiative to involve volunteers, local communities and the general public.

## **The State of the Countryside**

### Setting the Scene

The Integrated Management Plan seeks a sustainable future for the moorland and the enclosed farmed grasslands, meadows and pastures. The local community has been actively consulted and involved in the preparation process.

The influence of man is visible everywhere in the Upper Colne Valley. Several thousand years ago, early settlers deforested the hills, which played a significant role in the creation of the moors, as we know them today. Later dry stone walls were erected and evidence of the rich industrial past can be seen in gritstone quarries and the remains of the excavation of the longest, highest and deepest canal tunnel in Britain. On the moors it is easy to forget that five million people live nearby and this feeling of remote wilderness resulting from past and present human activities is a key feature of the area.

### Transport History

The quantity and diversity of well preserved transport archaeological features in the area, including Roman road, Huddersfield Narrow Canal, turnpike roads and railway make are remarkable. Yet, significant proportions of these features receive limited recognition.

### Blanket Bog

The peat blanket bogs are the main features of ecological and geographical interest. The blanket bog supports internationally important populations of breeding birds, including Golden Plover, Dunlin and Merlin, and its value has been recognised through multiple conservation status. The peat also contains a record of vegetation and climate history over the past 8000 years and has protected some of the best Mesolithic flint scatters in Europe.

### Hay Meadows

The mosaic of moorland pastures and hay meadows contributes to the characteristic scenery of the area as well as being the ideal habitat for Twite. There are less than 500 pairs of this little known relative of the Linnet left in England. The loss of hay meadows, an essential

source of seed for this bird, is threatening the survival of this species in England. This is also affecting the landscape, with the once diverse mixtures of pastures and hay meadows either being intensified or returning to moorland.

### Visitors

The combination of striking landscape and rich local heritage in the Upper Colne Valley has attracted visitors over the past fifty years. A vast majority of the visitors are local, from West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester. The reopening of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and the Standedge Tunnel, and the opening of the Standedge Visitor Centre has led to a new influx of visitors and some regeneration for Marsden and Slaithwaite.

### The Economy

The local economy used to be based on a mixture of textile industry and part time farming, which have both seen a serious decline resulting in a lack of jobs especially for workers with redundant skills. The area has however, seen a growth in small businesses, including art and crafts, outdoor leisure and information technology; it has also become part of the Manchester, Bradford and Leeds commuter belt. Due to the large number of visitors the tourism and hospitality sector is also an important part of the local economy.

### Water

The high rainfall in the area and the steep valley sides has provided ideal conditions for the construction of many reservoirs. These provide water for the surrounding towns and cities as well as holding water supplies for the canal.

### **Consultation**

The local community, landowners and users of the local countryside were actively consulted during the preparation of the Integrated Management Plan. A house to house doorstep survey, public consultation meetings, one to one meetings with the Project Officer and postal questionnaires ensured that those who wanted to had the opportunity to contribute to the Plan.

## Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Facing the Upper Colne Valley

### SWOT Analysis for the Upper Colne Valley

| Strengths  | Opportunities  |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Distinctive landscape character</li> <li>2. Blanket bog on fringe of distribution</li> <li>3. Breeding birds of international significance</li> <li>4. Transport remains of international significance</li> <li>5. Mesolithic flint scatters of European significance</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Visitors</li> <li>2. Niche marketing of agricultural products</li> <li>3. External grant aid</li> <li>4. Reform of Common Agricultural Policy</li> <li>5. Yorkshire Forward "Renaissance Market Towns" initiative</li> </ol>   |
| Weaknesses   | Threats  |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Historic decline of farming</li> <li>2. Unsustainable farming practices</li> <li>3. Few local entrepreneurs</li> <li>4. Little potential for farm diversification</li> <li>5. Poor quality infrastructure for visitors e.g. footpaths and bed and breakfast</li> </ol>           | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Poorly targeted agricultural subsidies</li> <li>2. Atmospheric pollution and global warming</li> <li>3. External grant aid requires matched funding, which is difficult to secure</li> <li>4. Reliance of visitors on private cars</li> <li>5. Changes in the funding priorities of Yorkshire Forward</li> </ol> |

### Vision for the Upper Colne Valley

Our vision for the Upper Colne Valley is of a sustainable and economically active countryside, based on traditional and new enterprises, where the historical and natural environment is maintained to conserve the distinctive upland character. The stakeholders and local community are involved in the process and opportunities created for visitors to enjoy the area without damaging what they come to experience.

### Aims

Conserve, promote and enhance the special biodiversity interest of the area

Encourage economic vitality in the local countryside

Encourage sustainable land management in the area

Promote sustainable recreational use of the local countryside

Conserve, enhance and promote the heritage and landscape assets of the area

Ensure community involvement in the management of the area.

## A sustainable future for the Upper Colne Valley

### Biodiversity

| Objectives  | Actions  |
|---|--|
| Protect the internationally important population of breeding birds, prioritising the nationally important population of Twite.                  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement recommendations from Peak District and Kirklees Biodiversity Action Plans.</li> <li>• Survey existing breeding populations of important bird species.</li> <li>• Promote wildlife-friendly land management in the area.</li> </ul>  |
| Protect and increase the area of high biodiversity value in-bye (hay meadow, unimproved pasture)  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey grasslands in the area to identify species rich fields and potential threats.</li> <li>• Safeguard existing species rich upland meadows and unimproved pastures.</li> <li>• Increase the amount of species rich upland meadows and unimproved pastures in the area.</li> <li>• Increase biodiversity in semi-improved grassland.</li> </ul>  |
| Improve the biodiversity value of the moorland  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement recommendations from Peak District and Kirklees Biodiversity Action Plans.</li> <li>• Seek funding and opportunities to survey area for poorly known species groups.</li> <li>• Preserve and improve the mosaic of diverse moorland habitats</li> <li>• Continue re-vegetation programmes to create a diversity of habitats on the moors.</li> <li>• Increase public awareness of the fragility of blanket bog</li> <li>• Continue blanket bog recovery programme.</li> </ul> |
| Protect and improve the general state of the few remaining semi-natural upland woodlands and selectively increase the tree cover in the Valley. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Selectively increase the area of semi natural woodland in the area.</li> <li>• Increase the biodiversity value of existing woodland.</li> </ul>   |

### Community

| Objectives   | Actions  |
|--|--|
| Encourage the local community to enjoy and value the local countryside | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide information to the local community on progress of the Upper Colne Valley Project.</li> <li>• Support appropriate community countryside projects</li> <li>• Encourage education programmes and events increasing knowledge of the local countryside.</li> <li>• Provide well surfaced easily followed walking routes.</li> </ul> |
| Improve the understanding of farming by local community                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Organise interpretative field visits for the local community.</li> </ul>  |
| Reduce sheep problem in Marsden village.                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Suggest solutions to limit the amount of damage</li> </ul>  |

|  |  |
|--|--|
|  | <p>caused by sheep.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with the local community to overcome problems with sheep while recognising the rights of commoners.</li> <li>• Help in fencing out the village from the moorland.</li> </ul> |
|--|--|

## Leisure

| Objectives   | Actions  |
|--|--|
| Develop visitor management so that, users can enjoy the countryside without harming habitats and heritage features or disturbing wildlife. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Work with event organisers, activity providers and user groups to ensure their activities are in accordance with the carrying capacity of the habitats.</li> </ul>  |
| Improve access to the countryside (access for all)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide routes in the area to accommodate all levels of fitness and ability.</li> <li>• All actions to be socially inclusive.</li> </ul>  |
| Support appropriate leisure activities in the countryside and minimise conflicts between user groups.                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a user group forum.</li> <li>• Consider improvements and extensions to the bridleway network in addition to current plans.</li> <li>• Support appropriate countryside activities in the area.</li> <li>• Seek to decrease the amount of illegal and antisocial activities taking place in the area.</li> </ul> |
| Encourage visitors to benefit the local economy through increasing their spend and creating economic opportunities                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promote sustainable countryside activities in the area.</li> <li>• Seek to guarantee the quality of the experience of visitors to the area.</li> <li>• Provide better information on facilities in the village to countryside visitors.</li> </ul>  |
| Promote the use of public transport to reach and to move about within the area.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase the use of public transport to reach and explore the area</li> <li>• Seek to improve the provision of public transport for the benefit of the local community and visitors.</li> </ul>   |

## Rural Development

| Objectives   | Actions   |
|--|---|
| Seek Opportunities to support local produce  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support "Made in Yorkshire", "Yorkshire Pantry" and "Protected Landscape" initiatives.</li> <li>• Encourage local businesses to use local produce.</li> </ul>  |
| Protect and manage the local heritage landscape & biodiversity so they benefit the local economy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research the importance of visitors and the environment for the local economy in order to base our work on economic facts</li> <li>• Strengthen the image of the Upper Colne Colne Valley, within the 'Pennine Yorkshire' tourism strategy.</li> </ul> |
| Identify training needs and mechanisms to provide the  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify training needs in the area.</li> </ul>  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| local workforce with the skills required to manage the countryside in a sustainable way.                    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support and organise training schemes in countryside skills.</li> </ul>   |
| Maximise and diversify the funding in the Upper Colne Valley for regeneration and environmental enhancement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Works with other adjoining and larger area bodies to access money available for larger projects and develop ""Central Pennines"" - wide projects</li> <li>• Assist existing and new businesses to obtain the help available to them and assist the creation of new countryside related businesses (green tourism, habitat management etc...)</li> <li>• Maximise the amount of funds available for the project</li> </ul> |

## Land Management

| Objectives  | Actions  |
|---|--|
| Ensure that local reservoirs are managed in sympathy with the local landscape and biodiversity. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey reservoir and catch-waters to assess value for biodiversity and propose improvements and best practices compatible with their primary function.</li> </ul>   |
| Support sustainable approach to farming and biodiversity sympathetic farming techniques         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Encourage farmers to take up agri environmental measures.</li> <li>• Provide hobby farmers and horse owners with information of best management practices.</li> <li>• Support sustainable farm diversification consistent with National Park and Green Belt designation.</li> </ul> |
| Support more effective and sustainable moorland management                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Collaborate with farmers to provide varied grazing regimes to suit the needs of different key species in the area.</li> <li>• Encourage local shooting syndicates to manage their shoots more sustainably.</li> </ul>   |

## Landscape and Heritage

| Objectives  | Actions  |
|---|--|
| Value the archaeology and the cultural heritage of the area in the way it is managed. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey archaeology and cultural heritage in order to identify important remains, prioritise actions and develop a strategy.</li> <li>• Provide interpretation of the most interesting archaeological remains.</li> <li>• Assist land owners to realise the value for biodiversity, landscape and heritage of their assets.</li> </ul> |
| Maintain evidence of the traditional walled enclosure system.                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Survey local dry stone walls to identify the most important so as to prioritise restoration and maintenance work.</li> </ul>  |

## **Technical Terms**

### **Biodiversity**

Biological diversity - "Biodiversity" - is the variety of life on earth. It is nature's variety of species, habitats and whole ecological systems. Human society's interaction with biodiversity shows whether our economic and social development is sustainable.

### **Blanket Bog**

A bog formed under conditions of frequent, high rainfall, swathing the whole land surface where it is relatively horizontal.

### **Climate**

The total complex of weather conditions, its average characteristics and range of variations over an appreciable area of the earth's surface.

### **Gritstone**

A coarse sandstone, usually massive, with grains of uneven size, probably a compacted marine deltaic deposit.

### **Habitat**

An area in which the requirements of a specific animal or plant are met.

### **Mesolithic**

The Middle Stone Age, from 4,000 to 10,000BC, characterised by the use of microlithic implements.

### **Moorland**

Strictly an upland area of siliceous rocks, such as gritstone, where acid peat (derived from sphagnum, cotton sedge, purple moor-grass) has accumulated under damp conditions.

### **Sustainable Development**

Sustainable development is about creating a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. It encompasses environmental, social and economic goals.

### **Valley**

An elongated depression sloping towards the sea or an inland drainage basin, usually though not always occupied by a river.

## **Partners in the Upper Colne Valley Project**

English Nature  
Pennine Rural Development Programme  
Yorkshire Water  
The National Trust  
Peak District National Park Authority  
Kirklees Metropolitan Council  
DEFRA  
Environment Agency  
University of Huddersfield  
British Waterways

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|--|
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|--|

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9<sup>th</sup> October 2003



**Upper Colne Valley Integrated Management Plan  
(October 2003)**

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## **Introduction**

### **[Map of the area (including general location within GB)- Map 1**

The Upper Colne Valley lies above the small Pennine town of Marsden. It is a landscape of high moorland, dry stone walls, hay meadows, gritstone hamlets and reservoirs. At first glance the passage of time has been kind and the Valley is indeed often seen as archetypal Northern England, used as a regular location for shooting films and television. Appearances are however deceptive and this landscape has been in decline for at least a century. Times are now changing faster than ever and it is impossible to predict with certainty what the eventual outcome will be. The Valley was spared from the worst excesses of foot and mouth disease in 2001, but declining farm incomes, reform of the Common Agricultural Policy and isolation are all interacting to shape the future. Do you stand back and let these wider influences and market forces shape the future? This is an option, but such inaction would surrender the future of this special landscape to a less than certain outcome. What is certain is that rural communities, wildlife, traditional landscapes and informal recreation interests would suffer.

The National Trust, own and manage the extensive Marsden Moor Estate, a landscape which the Trust has been working hard to restore and conserve for many years. The Trust realised however that in order to make a real impact, there was a need to work in partnership with the other key agencies and landowners in the Valley. The Trust therefore took the imaginative step of inviting these agencies and landowners to join them as partners in the Upper Colne Valley Project. The initial purpose of the Project was to produce an Integrated Management Plan for this small, but significant area of Yorkshire. The recommendations of the Plan would be delivered by means of a costed work programme, to which the partners would commit themselves. This "joined up" approach was felt to be invaluable in justifying and increasing the success of external funding bids.

The Integrated Management Plan seeks a sustainable future for the moorland and surrounding in-bye (the enclosed farmed grasslands: meadows and pastures). The village of Marsden and the Valley floor has largely been omitted from the Plan, but the local community has been actively consulted and involved in the preparation process.

There are a few major landowners and the largest of these is The National Trust, all their Marsden Moor Estate being defined as urban common. The others include Yorkshire Water who own much of the land surrounding the reservoirs, Dartmouth Estate who own Cupwith Moor and Meltham Shoot who manage extensive moorland to the south east of the area (see map2).

[map 2 major landowners in the CV]

## **Statement of Significance**

Set at the junction between the South Pennines and the Dark Peak the Upper Colne Valley has developed a special character. The influence of man is visible everywhere. Several thousands of years ago, early settlers were responsible for deforestation of the hills. This played a significant role in the creation of the moors, as we know them today. Later dry stone walls were erected, many of them by prisoners from the Napoleonic wars, as a result of property law changes due to the Enclosure Acts. The rich industrial past is evident throughout the Valley; most visibly in disused mills, gritstone quarries and the remains of the excavation of the longest and highest canal tunnel in Britain. On the tops however, one can easily forget that five million people live in close proximity. This feeling of remote wilderness resulting from past and present human activities is a key feature of the area.

The Pennines are at their narrowest here, therefore Standedge has been a traditional passing place through the ages. The quantity and diversity of well preserved transport archaeological features in the area, including Roman road, canal, turnpike roads and railway make it of special interest. This interest has been revived with the restoration of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal. Yet, significant proportions of these features receive limited recognition.

The peat blanket bogs, some of the most south easterly and driest in Europe, are the main features of ecological and geographical interest. Industrial pollution, overgrazing and fires have further degraded a harsh environment. Nonetheless it supports internationally important populations of breeding birds, including Golden Plover, Dunlin and Merlin, and its value has been recognised through multiple conservation status. The peat also contains a record of vegetation and climate history over the past 8000 years and has protected some of the best Mesolithic flint scatters in Europe. The southern half of the area is part of the Peak District National Park one of the most heavily visited national parks in the world.

The mosaic of moorland pastures and hay meadows contributes to the characteristic scenery of the area as well as being the ideal habitat for Twite. There are less than 500 pairs of this little known relative of the Linnet left in England. The loss of hay meadows, an essential source of seed for this bird, is threatening the survival of this species in England. This decline is caused by the intensification of agricultural techniques associated with a reduction in the area of farmed land, mostly affecting the higher holdings. This is also affecting the landscape, as the enclosure system is becoming derelict and these once diverse mixtures of pastures and hay meadows are either being intensified or returning to moorland.

The combination of striking landscape and rich local heritage in the Upper Colne Valley has attracted visitors over the past fifty years. A vast majority of the visitors are local, from West Yorkshire and Greater Manchester. The reopening of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and the Standedge Tunnel, and the opening of the Standedge Visitor Centre has led to a new influx of visitors and some regeneration for Marsden and Slaithwaite. The villages and countryside are also used as locations for numerous films and TV programmes, including "The League of Gentlemen", "Last of the Summer Wine" and "Where the Heart is...", the associated publicity has attracted additional visitors to the Colne Valley.

The local economy used to be based on a mixture of textile industry and part time farming, which have both seen a serious decline resulting in a lack of jobs especially for workers with redundant skills. The area has however, seen a growth in small businesses, including art and crafts, outdoor leisure and information technology; it has also become part of the Manchester, Bradford and Leeds commuter belt. Due to the large number of visitors the tourism and hospitality sector is also an important part of the local economy. The high rainfall in the area and the steep valley sides has provided ideal conditions for the construction of many reservoirs. These provide water for the surrounding towns and cities as well as holding water supplies for the canal.

## **The Colne Valley Past and Present**

### ***Local economy***

The countryside and urban area of the Upper Colne Valley are closely inter-related. There is no specific information on the economy of the Upper Colne Valley, but statistics for the Colne Valley West Ward give an indication of trends.

The most striking aspect of the employment mix in Colne Valley West is the dominance of manufacturing. The sector accounts for 51% of all jobs in the Ward, the highest proportion in Kirklees and twice the district average of 26%. It is not surprising therefore that the service sector is small although growing, at 44% of jobs, well below the District average of 70%. This makes the local economy vulnerable to the competitive pressures that have instigated the long-term decline of the manufacturing sector and less able to benefit from service sector growth.

Colne Valley West is one of thirteen wards in Kirklees that qualify for EU Objective 2 status for the period 2000-2006 because of higher than average levels of deprivation and the decline of traditional industries. Research by Manchester University in the late 1990s found concentrations of deprivation in the Colne Valley towns of Marsden and Slaithwaite worse than the national average.

The Ward ranks 17<sup>th</sup> out of 24 in Kirklees in terms of deprivation, with 24 being least deprived, but is the most deprived rural ward. All the wards above it are within or peripheral to urban areas, where deprivation is more concentrated and more “visible” in statistical terms.

A feature typical of rural England and seen in the Upper Colne Valley is the proximity of areas of affluence to areas of deprivation, which ward level data tends to mask. Another key feature is that manufacturing is more important to the local economy than in the district as a whole. Job losses can have a more significant impact than in urban areas, due to the cost of travel and few alternative employment opportunities. A handful of large manufacturing firms account for a fifth of jobs in Colne Valley West and there have been significant redundancies in the remaining textile firms recently.

The Ward is distinctive in that it has one of the smallest resident populations and one of the lowest levels of population density in the district, yet it is the second largest Ward in terms of area. This magnifies issues of access and isolation, while further masking evidence of deprivation. The Ward’s ethnic minority population is one of the smallest in the District, at around 1% of residents. In this respect it follows the pattern found in the rest of rural South Kirklees.

## **Biodiversity**

### Habitats

#### **[include map 3 priority habitats]**

##### *Blanket Bog*

Blanket bog covers a large proportion of the Upper Colne Valley and is characterised by a thick layer of peat up to 150cm covering the landscape. The blanket bog habitat has been attributed to the clearance of forest by early Neolithic settlers. It is one of the most interesting ecological features of the area as it is one of the driest blanket bogs in the UK. The UK holds 10 to 15% of the world's blanket bogs, giving this country international responsibility for the conservation of this habitat.

It is unclear whether the blanket bog is still active, but it is in a very degraded state. There are erosion gullies, bare patches of peat and sphagnum moss which should be common is a rare habitat. There are numerous reasons for this degradation, but the most important are atmospheric pollution over the past 200 years, uncontrolled burning and overgrazing. Wild fires have had a very negative impact and the summer of 1976 was especially harmful. It has been argued that gully erosion may have commenced much earlier than is often thought, during the dry and warm climatic period at the end of the Middle Ages.

Despite its degraded state the bog area holds internationally important populations of breeding birds. The botanical diversity is however, very restricted and the only species of note are of local importance, for example Cloudberry and Cranberry. Plant biodiversity may have been much higher during the 17<sup>th</sup> century with species such as Sundews and orchid species mentioned, which are now extinct or rare. Finally because the Upper Colne Valley is on the edge of blanket bog distribution in Europe, it is possible that climatic conditions are no longer suitable for active growth of peat in the area and that the blanket bog is a relict habitat.

##### *Dwarf Shrub Heath & White Moor*

All the moorland which is not blanket bog has been grouped under this heading, it is also in a very degraded state mostly visible through large areas of white moor, grassy moorland dominated by *Molinia caerulea*. This habitat holds very little biodiversity interest, the cloughs being the most diverse habitats holding a few locally rare species of birds, including Winchat, Stonechat and Ring Ouzel. Some flushes hold diverse botanical assemblages and are of regional significance, species including Round-Leafed Sundew, Bog Asphodel, and a notable diversity of Sedge and *Sphagnum* mosses. Some areas have good heather cover mostly through National Trust exclosures and grouse moor management.

##### *In-bye*

The term in-bye describes all the enclosed fields in the upland, which include grazed grassland, hay meadows and silage fields. The more improved grasslands and silage fields hold very little biodiversity apart from the odd recently re-seeded field used by Lapwings and Golden Plovers. However the more traditionally managed, unimproved and semi-improved grasslands are very important, as they hold numbers of breeding waders. There are for example 40-50 pairs of Lapwing, 10-20 pairs of Curlew and at least 30 pairs of Snipe, especially around Deer Hill Reservoir and in the Bradshaw area. Hay meadows are essential to the continued survival of Twite in the area and some are rich in wildflowers.

High biodiversity in-byes have been declining over the whole of upland Britain the main reason being the intensification of grassland management resulting in the dominance of haylage, silage fields and improved pastures. The general decline in the number of active holdings in the Upper Colne Valley has meant that many of the higher in-byes are no longer farmed and are developing by succession into moor, scrub or woodland.

Two areas of in-byes are particularly important. The cluster of hay meadows at the top of Binn Road has an exceptionally diverse flora for this area including Wood Anemone and Yellow Rattle. These few meadows are the key to the survival of the Twite population locally, with flocks of over 60 birds being observed in the summer 2001. Two unimproved pastures (see map) one near Blackmoorfoot the other near Meltham Lodge have acted as feeding grounds for large numbers of Golden Plover over the years, with up to 150 birds recorded in spring 2002. The protection of these pastures could be essential to the survival of this species as a breeding bird on the blanket bog. The pastures surrounding Meltham Lodge are also important as they hold the last sizeable population of breeding Lapwings in the Colne Valley.

#### *Woodland*

The Colne Valley has a very low tree cover, estimated at 5% in 1995, of which very little is semi-natural woodland. Planted woodland adds to biodiversity, but the remnants of the original woodland cover are of far greater value. Two important areas of semi-natural woodland are, Drop Clough, as recognised by its SSSI status, and Holme Bank Wood. The latter is the only extensive upland birch-oak woodland in the area, but unfortunately it is heavily grazed leading to a total absence of any ground flora and natural regeneration.

The presence of trees on the moorland has been identified as detrimental to some breeding species (Dunlin and Golden Plover) and any tree planting near the SSSI will need to be considered carefully. There is however a lack of mid-successional habitats and sparsely wooded habitats in the area as shown by the scarcity of species such as Redstart or Tree Pipit.

#### *Streams & Reservoirs*

The streams and reservoirs are not thought to hold any rare species, but it must be noted that there is no available data on invertebrates. The reservoirs hold little wildlife mostly due to their depth, variations of water levels and the acid nature of the water. As their main function is water supply, they are not likely to be managed in a way suitable for encouraging more aquatic vegetation to develop. Nonetheless the local stream network holds a healthy population of Dippers, Grey Wagtails and Common Sandpipers.

#### Important Bird Species

##### *Twite*

The Twite is a small brown finch, a close relative to the Linnet (see picture). In England it is restricted to a few moorland populations in the Pennines, and at a national level it is on the Red List of Birds of Conservation Concern because of its population decline. The 1990 population estimate for the South Pennines, including the Peak District National Park was 200-400 pairs. The 1999 survey came up with an estimate of 225 pairs (95% confidence limits 110-337 pairs). Comparison is not easy between the two surveys because 1990 was moorland-only, whereas 1999 was moorland, in-bye and hay meadows etc.

However, less than 20% of 1km squares recording Twite in 1990, still had Twite in 1999, indicating a range contraction. A comparison of moorland-only records of Twite from survey squares in 1999, compared with the same squares in 1990 shows a population decline of approximately 50%. The Kirklees population is probably about 20-50 pairs, which is about 9% to 22% of the English population. This is the southern most viable population of the species in the UK and it is widely regarded as the most important conservation issue in the area.

The decline of this species in upland habitat in Britain is linked to the decline of hay meadows, as they and their young feed exclusively on seeds and need a steady supply throughout the summer. They breed mostly in bracken and tall heather within two miles from their favoured feeding sites. In the Upper Colne Valley the main concentrations of the species are found in the Wessenden Valley, around Deer Hill and in the March Haigh area. A significant proportion of Twite breed in bracken, so before any bracken control takes place the area should be surveyed for the presence of breeding Twite.

##### *Ring Ouzel*

Another moorland species dependent on upland agriculture, this striking member of the thrush family breeds in moorland cloughs and edges but needs sheep pasture nearby to feed. This species has declined drastically in England over the past 20 years. In the 70s counts of 30 birds were regular in the Wessenden Valley or around Digley Reservoir, but now any count over 5 is exceptional. The causes of the decline may be linked to the disappearance of the higher sheep pastures. It is also believed that human disturbance is a factor affecting this species on the more visited edges of Upland Britain. Recent research by the RSPB indicates that areas of bare ground near breeding sites could be important and that reduced grazing resulting in less bare ground could prove problematic for this species.

This species is an amber-listed Bird of Conservation Concern, on the basis of a 27% range contraction in Britain during the period 1968-91. A recent field survey indicated the decline might be even more drastic. Preliminary results, from the first ever, national breeding Ring Ouzel survey, indicate that only around 60% of sites occupied during 1988-91 study were occupied in 1999. The species is now only found in small numbers in the area with 2-4 pairs in the Wessenden Valley and other birds recorded in the March Haigh area in 2001.

*Merlin*

The South Pennines as a whole are thought to hold around 75 pairs of this species, representing 6% of the British population and from one to three pairs breed in the Upper Colne Valley. They favour clough sides with heather and rocky ledges, but have been known to breed in old crow nests on isolated trees. This species does not seem to be under threat in the area and the provision of exclosures on the moorland has probably been beneficial.

*Golden Plover & Dunlin*

These two waders both breed on the blanket bog in similar habitats. The South Pennines holds internationally important population of these species. Golden Plovers are wide spread over most of the blanket bog, especially areas with bare peat patches. Dunlins are known to be present but due to their secretive habits the distribution is unclear. Deer Hill Moss and the moors surrounding Black Moss Reservoir seems to be the best locations for this species. The population seems to be stable at present and it is clear that Dunlins favour areas near pools to breed in. The creation of pools on the moors might increase the breeding density of this small wader, as well as providing habitat for Dragonflies, Damselflies and Craneflies.

Golden Plovers are more abundant and the South Pennines holds the highest concentrations of this species in the UK. Their breeding habitat is not threatened, but recent work has shown that they need a specific type of unimproved pastures to feed on. In the area only two such sites have been located (see map 3). Golden Plovers change breeding site from one year to the next which makes it difficult to provide an estimate for the population, but it is likely that at least 50 pairs breed in the area. The blanket bog to the south of the area is especially suitable for this species and very high densities can be found around Black Moss Reservoir. The exact distribution should be surveyed and the possible impacts of habitat modification need to be evaluated before any restoration work takes place.

*Raven & Peregrine*

Both these species share similar breeding habitat of cliffs and crags and similar fortune. They declined drastically in Britain between the 1930s and the 1980s but their populations have increased rapidly since 1990. The Peregrine has nested in two of the past four years in the area, at two different sites, but at one site in 2000 the nest was robbed. Similarly ravens have bred in the area at least once in the past five years and are seen flying on the moor regularly. Unless undisturbed rock faces are provided in the Upper Colne Valley it is highly unlikely that these species will become regular breeders.

*Lapwing, Curlew, Redshank and Snipe*

The majority of these waders use unimproved pasture. Redshank no longer breeds in the in-byes and only one or two pairs are found around Black Moss and Swelland Reservoirs. Curlews breed in small numbers on the higher in-byes and on the blanket bog. Lapwings are found mostly on rush pasture and recently re-seeded improved grasslands. Snipe are found in fields with significant cover of rush. All four species have declined drastically in Britain over the past 20 years mirroring the general intensification of pasture management. Only through the maintenance of extensively managed grasslands will these species carry-on breeding in any numbers in the area.

*Short-eared Owl*

The South Pennines holds internationally important populations for this species, which favours open moorland and breeds irregularly within the area. The population dynamics of this species are linked to those of the small mammals on which it feeds. The number of breeding Short-eared Owls can therefore vary from one year to the next. This species is not likely to be under any threat in the near future.

*Winchat:*

This species is not yet listed as a species of conservation concern in Britain but has seen a huge contraction in range. The lowland populations have been affected most but there has been a decline in the uplands as well. The species is relatively abundant in the Upper Colne Valley its favoured habitat being bracken in steep cloughs, with 8-15 pairs recorded in the Wessenden Valley. The requirements of this species must be taken into consideration when controlling bracken or planting up cloughs.

Landscape

*Geology*

The geology of the area is uniform with the Millstone Grit Series, a succession of rough sandstone and shale layers. It gives rise to the typical South Pennine landscape, with rounded hill and well-defined edges where the Millstone Grit layers are exposed. Gentle slopes associated with the acidic substrate and the wet weather, averaging 1600mm rain per year at the top of March Haigh, have provided ideal conditions for the establishment of one of the oldest and thickest blanket bogs in England.

General Character (To be illustrated by picture of local landscape)

*Geomorphology*

Most of the area falls within the "Dark Peak" as defined by the Countryside Agency, Countryside Character Initiative. Its key features are the blanket bog, the surrounding moors of Purple Moor Grass and Heather, the mill towns and villages and the enclosed pastures. The existence of broad-leafed woodlands in the cloughs is also regarded a small but significant part of the local character.

The Upper Colne Valley holds all of these characteristic elements of the landscape. The Pennine summits consist of an undulating plateau with large areas of blanket bog, eroding peat and vegetation dominated by Crowberry, clearly seen at Close Moss, Black Moss, Wessenden Head and Deer Hill

Moss. This is surrounded by large areas of Purple Moor Grass with Heather mostly confined to grouse moors and regeneration plots on the National Trust estate. The Wessenden Valley is particularly steep and visually striking, with four reservoirs leading down to the River Colne. Marsden and Slaithwaite two typical mill villages dominate the Colne Valley with disused mills and rows of stone built terraces. The farmed landscape is also important, the Bradshaw and Deer Hill areas forming a mosaic of meadows and pastures separated by stone walls. Pule Hill stands in the middle, with its low vegetation showing the scars of past activities: quarries, spoil heaps, and the whole array of historical routes. From Buckstones one can see examples of relict landslides.

The historic demise of woodland is another key feature, with only the eastern side of Wessenden Valley and Netherwood significantly wooded.

Landscapes in the Upper Colne Valley are heavily affected by man, reflecting the present and past use of the land. Land use is steadily changing and the local landscape will mirror this trend. The decrease in the number of sheep is already visible with some eroded areas being re-vegetated and Heather and Bilberry re-establishing. Much of the in-bye is slowly returning to moorland due to lack of management.

Maintaining a static landscape is unfeasible and far too costly. It is however feasible to influence the evolution of the landscape in a specific direction.

#### *Local archaeology, history and heritage*

The earliest indications of human activity in the area are Mesolithic flint scatters found under the blanket bog. Several sites of international importance are located in the area. The Warcock Hill finds include flints estimated to be older than 7000 BC. Other significant sites include March Hill, Dean Clough and Lominot and the finds indicate the area was used intensively by hunter-gatherers between 7000 and 3000 BC. This activity corresponds to the onset of peat deposition and the development of blanket bog. It has been assumed that the activities of these early inhabitants were responsible for triggering the creation of this specific habitat. The presence of many layers of charcoal at the base of the peat deposits hints to the importance of fires in the removal of tree cover.

Roman occupation was light in the area although a Roman road used the Colne Valley to cross the Pennines. There was a fort just to the west of the area near Castleshaw Reservoir in Saddleworth.

The area was at the heart of the industrial revolution as seen in the international significance of the transport archaeology, with the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, the Standedge Tunnels, the well-preserved packhorse routes and turnpike roads. The Colne Valley was also at the heart of the Luddite movement and Enoch and James Taylor the makers of the shearing frames so despised by the Luddites were based in Marsden.

#### Leisure activity & visitors

#### **[insert map 4 main FP, Car park, Bridle ways etc..]**

#### *Tourism or Visitors*

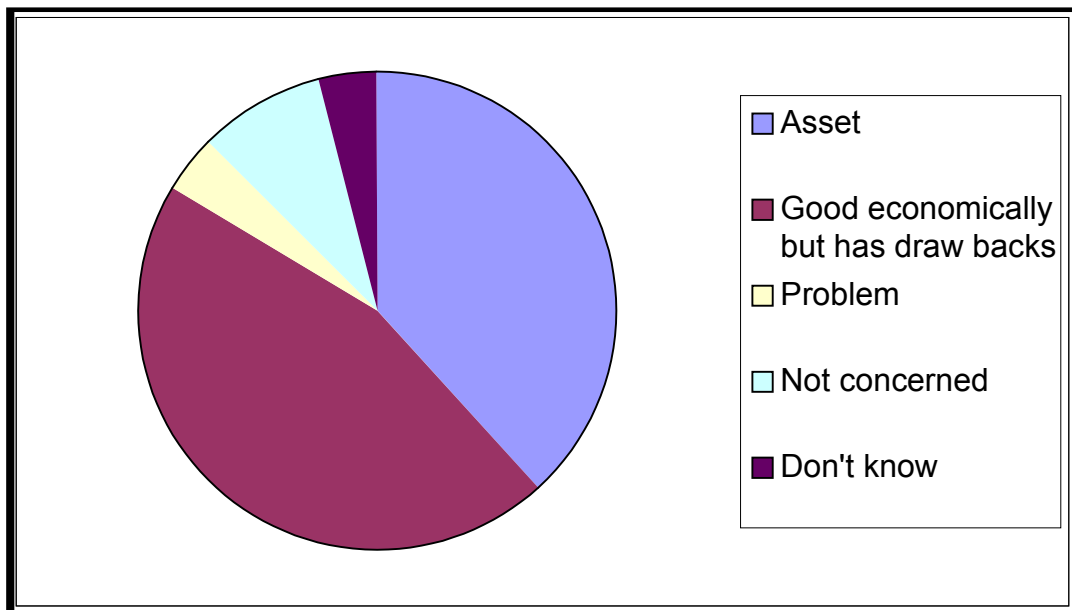
The Colne Valley is being promoted as part of "Pennine Yorkshire" an initiative to promote Kirklees, Calderdale and Barnsley as visitor destinations.

The “Kirklees Visitor Strategy” and “A Strategy for Sport and Recreation in Kirklees”, both emphasise the importance of encouraging active recreation in the local countryside. The area holds many features of interest for visitors including “wild” countryside, a micro-brewery, industrial archaeology and a rich heritage. Compared with the Holme Valley however, the Colne does not attract the same number of visitors.

There is no specific data available on the area, but the number of visitors has been increasing. The most probable factors are the rise of "green tourism", the renovation of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal and the use of the area as a location for TV programmes and films. In tourism terms the Upper Colne Valley needs to be considered with the whole of South Kirklees, as it is the whole area which attracts potential visitors.

Visitors are felt to be an important economic asset of the Colne Valley, but most are day-trippers from nearby urban centres. They spend on average less than overnight visitors, but they have a positive impact on the catering trade.

Visitors are likely to benefit the local economy most if they go into the village centres so it is important to link the countryside with those centres in order to support local shops. The local population views tourism (visitors) mostly as an asset (83%) although a significant proportion (45%) admits it has its drawbacks (see figure XX).



**Fig XX:** How is tourism viewed by Marsden Residents? (2001 doorstep survey)

Walking

Walking is the most popular physical activity in the UK. The area offers most types of walks from a gentle stroll down the Huddersfield Narrow Canal Towpath to a tough ramble along the Pennine Way. Apart from the

Wessenden Valley Road and the Canal towpath there are few well-surfaced well sign-posted paths in the area, which probably limits the number of "occasional walkers". Excellent short routes are provided by the National Trust and the Kirklees Way has recently been re-waymarked and a new guidebook "Walk the Kirklees Way" published by Kirklees Metropolitan Council in partnership with The Huddersfield Daily Examiner and Public Arts. Many of the waymarked walks in the area are however in a poor state of repair and have not been maintained for some years now for example the Colne Valley Circular, the Station to Station Walk and Standedge Trail.

Only 16% of the local community regards walkers and rambler pressure as a problem, but 65% would like to see better footpaths in the area.

A few improvements to selected footpaths would attract more of the wider public to enjoy the area, in addition to the specialised walkers who mostly use the Upper Colne Valley at present.

The fragility of the blanket bog to high visitor pressure is well known and large numbers of walkers can turn areas of peat bog into a quagmire **(Picture)**. In the Upper Colne Valley there is one black spot on the old Pennine Way where the flagstone causeway terminates. Much of the area is open to public access, but very few walkers venture outside well marked footpaths and it is very likely that the terrain will protect it from high visitor pressure.

#### *Cycling and riding*

One of the most common complaints from cyclists and horse riders in the Upper Colne Valley is the lack of bridleways. Away from Wessenden Valley Road and the permissive bridleway along Turnpike Two there is no network on which to ride and cycle away from the roads. As many of the roads are typical upland winding narrow lanes, cyclists and horse riders are very wary and many car drivers see them as a hazard. The lack of authorised routes for cyclists also means that there are mountain-bikers making unauthorised use of footpaths. The local geography and narrowness of the roads restricts the number of on-road cyclists, but the area is on the West Yorkshire Cycle route.

#### *Outdoor sports*

A number of outdoor sports take place in the Upper Colne Valley. The area is not the most sought after location for rock-climbing, but some groups regularly use Pule Hill and Shooter's Nab quarries. The National Trust has provided licences for paragliding to take place from Pule Hill and Buckstone Edge. There is also some fell running and orienteering on a casual basis. The west side of Pule Hill is used to fly model aircraft.

Unapproved off road motorcycling is illegal and causing problems in the area. A section of the local youth takes part in this activity, but there is a dearth of facilities to pursue their chosen sport. There does not seem to be a suitable site for them in the area, but the bikers have to be taken into account if a bridleway network is to be developed as it is possible they may use it.

#### *Hunting, fishing and shooting*

Shooting does not have a big economic impact in the area, as small shooting syndicates are responsible for all the organised activity. Shooting does, however, play a significant role in landscape and habitat management. There are four separate shoots, two on The National Trust Marsden Moor estate and

one on each of Cupwith Moor and Meltham Moor. The Meltham shoot manages a large part of the area to the south-west and they have managed to increase heather cover and the size of their grouse bags significantly. They are a notable example of what ESA payments can help to achieve and their management is beneficial to a number of bird species in the area as the shoot holds Dunlin, Twite, Ring Ouzel, Short-Eared Owl and Golden Plover. Cupwith is a small heather moor and very few Grouse are shot, as most of the shooting concerns Mallard and hand reared Pheasant.

Two packs of hounds hunt the area. The hunting takes place on foot and concerns hares and foxes. There is also some illegal hare coursing. A small number of falconers use the area and they were responsible for the release of Grey and Red-legged Partridges around Deer Hill in 2001.

Low level fishing occurs on the periphery of the area, including the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, Spath and Slaithwaite Reservoirs. None takes place in the area covered by the Integrated Management Plan due to acid waters and associated lack of fish.

#### Land management

#### *Water management*

### **Map of Res. in the area (including their main function)**

Steep valleys and high rainfall make the Upper Colne Valley an ideal area for the establishment of reservoirs. The earlier reservoirs (Black Moss, Swelland, March Haigh and Redbrook) were established for the provision of water to the Canal. Later reservoirs were built to provide water for the surrounding towns and villages. Reservoirs hold drinking water so any management within their catchment areas must ensure that it does not adversely affect water quality.

#### *Farming*

The harsh climate and acidic substrate, has meant that farming has always been marginal in the Upper Colne Valley. It is arguably one of the reasons for the commencement of the weaver's cottage industry in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> Centuries, one of the key stages of the Industrial Revolution. Since then agriculture has not been a full time activity, with the meagre income being supplemented by working in the local mills or quarries. Since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century only sheep have been reared on the uplands with a few meat and dairy cattle lower down. Arable crops are no longer farmed in the Upper Colne Valley.

From the remains of past land holdings and dry stone walls, it can be seen that agriculture has been in decline for some time now. **(photos of various stage of "re-wilding" in the area from area where only trace of farming is walling to "degrading improved pastures)**. When adding to this picture the recent farming crisis in the UK, the future of agriculture locally is bleak. The problem has been recognised as all of the area is classified as "severely disadvantaged" by DEFRA, but extra payments are not high enough to make upland farming economically viable in the area.

At present the local farming community is very diverse. There are a few full time farmers who make a living through selling most of their production direct

to the consumer via milk rounds and farm shops. They farm relatively large areas, usually including several farms. Several other large farms have their earnings complemented through barn conversions and building renovation. Of the smaller holdings most are part time and are either "lifestyle" or hobby farmers.

All of the National Trust estate is classified as Urban Common, meaning that graziers own the grazing rights. Only a relatively small proportion of these have stock on the moor, but any modification of the grazing regime needs the agreement of all the commoners. This has caused problems, as it can be difficult to modify the management regime to enhance landscape or biodiversity. Urban Common also means that there is open access throughout the Common.

Agri-environmental measures, such as ESA payments and Countryside Stewardship have been put in place to favour extensive agriculture and protect the environment and heritage. The uptake of ESA is good but not as high as in other parts of the Dark Peak. The dominance of common land is probably the main reason, as all the commoners have to agree to enter into an agreement. Although the area is part of the Pennine Moorland fringe, which is a priority area for Countryside Stewardship, there is little uptake (only three agreements, and at least two more being processed) of these payments in the Upper Colne Valley. There are several reasons; "life style" farmers do not want to get into 10 years agreements and other farmers do not want to implement the measures because hay is an unreliable crop, due to the weather; or they find the measures too restrictive. The cost of some of the measures, especially walling and re-wetting, which can be very expensive are a further deterrent.

Farming is an essential component of the local landscape, as grazing shapes the moor and the in-bye needs to be managed, to retain it's biodiversity interest. A number of species, including Twite, Golden Plover, Snipe and Lapwing depend on farmed habitats to feed or breed. If viable farming activity disappears from the Upper Colne Valley there will be some major changes to the landscape and the biodiversity. This would also affect leisure, as the character of the area would change. Unfortunately the continuation of farming is partly dependent on changes in the subsidies system, which is mainly reliant on decisions at a European level.

#### *Grouse moors*

Several parts of the Upper Colne Valley are managed for Grouse shooting there are two separate shoots on the National Trust estate. Cupwith Moor on Dartmouth Estate is being shot, although the grouse bag is extremely small, Mallard Ducks released on the reservoir and Pheasants tend to represent most of the bag for this site.

Meltham shoot is a small syndicate-run shoot which has created a very good moorland site through their own work, and shows what can be done with the help of ESA payments and many hours of voluntary work. The site yields good Grouse bags every year but also has a diversity of habitats and all of the priority bird species breeding on it. Heather cover has been increased substantially over the past 20 years and the number of Grouse has increased with it; reduced grazing pressure and reseedling have been the main tools.

The blanket bog has been left alone, apart from probably benefiting from the reduced grazing and a mosaic of small habitats has been maintained. Bracken control is taking place but some gullies have been left untouched.

### **Community consultations**

#### Information gathering

Most of the local community groups and users groups were consulted on an informal basis at the beginning of the project (for a complete list, see appendix 2). Those discussions provided the basis of the present Integrated Management Plan.

#### Doorstep survey

In order to get a picture of the views of the local community on the Upper Colne Valley 250 doorstep interviews were carried out in June 2001. The results have been summarised in "Doorstep survey of Marsdeners' views on and usage of the Countryside around the village". The main findings indicated

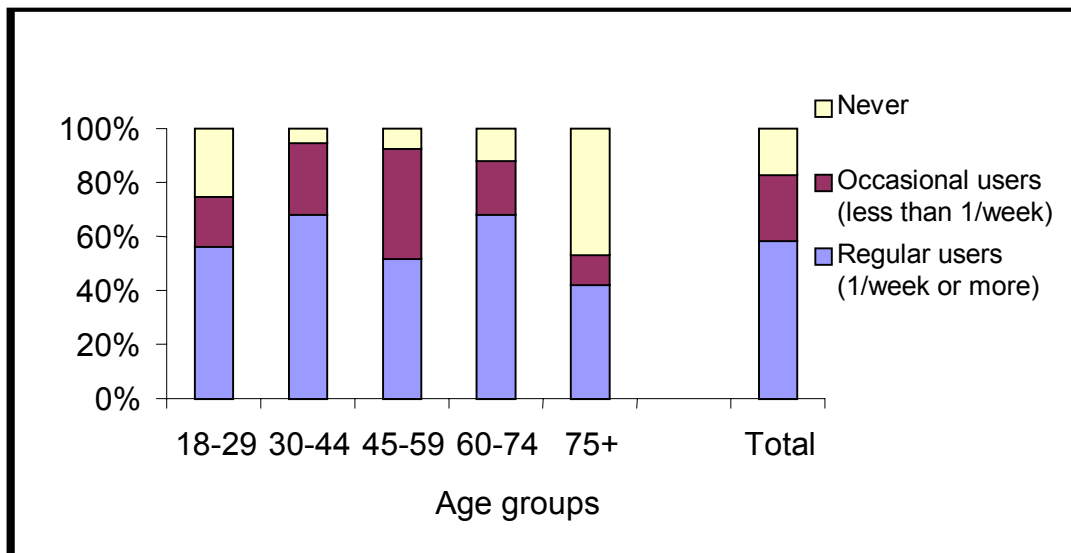
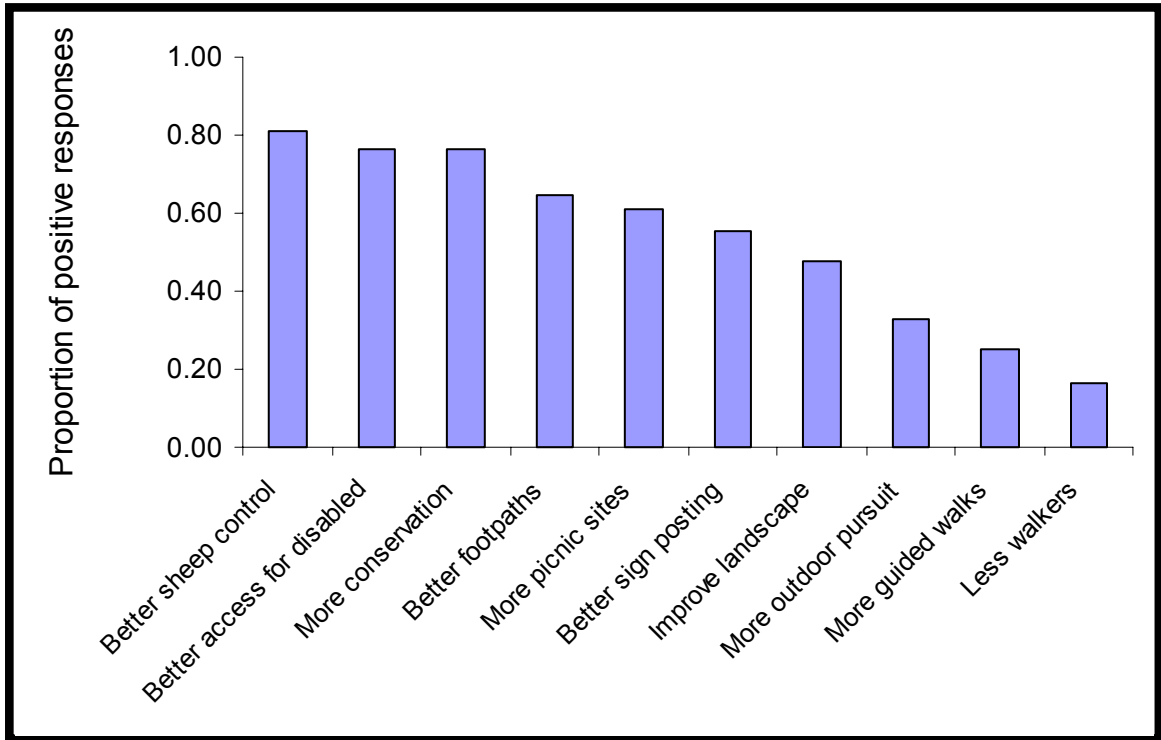


Fig XX: level of countryside use by Marsden residents for different age groups that Marsdeners value their local countryside (97% thought the local countryside was an asset) and that there is a high level of countryside use but with big differences between age groups (see figure XX).

Tourism was viewed as an asset by 84 %, but with a significant proportion (45% of the whole sample) indicating that it had its drawbacks. When asked about their priority for the local countryside their replies were as described in figure XX



**Fig XX:** Marsdeners' priorities for the local countryside from doorstep survey (June 2001)

Participative consultations

To ensure that the objectives and actions recommended in the Integrated Management Plan had the support of the local community two participative consultation exercises were conducted. The first one in July 2002 was centred on the objectives of the plan and the statement of significance while the second in October centred on the action plan. A good cross section of interests was represented at the meetings, including local farmers and there was overall support for the Integrated Management Plan. Most of the comments from the meetings have been integrated within this revised document.

## **Summary of Current Activities**

The Integrated Management Plan will draw together the existing initiatives in the Upper Colne Valley.

The most active agency is The National Trust, which carries out an extensive programme of moorland restoration and management on the Marsden Moor Estate. The Trust has considerable expertise in the management of upland environments, achieved by managing a network of such sites throughout the country. The Trust were however concerned that the Estate was being managed in isolation to the rest of the Upper Colne Valley, and instigated the production of this Integrated Management Plan.

The Peak District National Park Authority is leading the Moors for the Future project, which will promote understanding of the moors throughout the National Park and create opportunities for more people to enjoy their special qualities. The Heritage Lottery Fund awarded £3.1 million towards the project and a further £1.6 million is coming from project partners. Implementation started in February 2003. The lottery grant, alongside the funding from partners, will enable restoration of more than 300 hectares of moorland damaged by fires, repairing the scars of over 19 km of eroded paths as well as finding ways to reduce the disturbance to wildlife across sensitive sites. There will be education projects and a 'Moor Care' initiative to involve volunteers, local communities and the general public.

Yorkshire Water owns most of the reservoirs in the area, much of the surrounding land and the catchwater drains. The landholdings are managed positively, but in line with operational requirements for water supply.

DEFRA's responsibilities include the North Peak Environmentally Sensitive Area and Countryside Stewardship Agreements. Take up of agreements has been low where the ESA coincides with common land, as all commoners need to be committed to the scheme.

British Waterways is responsible for the operation of the Huddersfield Narrow Canal, which is excluded from the remit of the Integrated Management Plan. The Canal and the Standedge Visitor Centre have however already had a significant impact, attracting visitors into the wider area. British Waterways is also responsible for a number of reservoirs built to supply the Canal.

Kirklees Metropolitan Council no longer has a countryside officer dedicated to the Colne Valley, but a presence is maintained via a number of officers including the Countryside Manager and the Biodiversity Co-ordinator. The Council also runs the Marsden Information Point, which provides information on a wide range of services in addition to countryside recreation and tourism.

## **The Issues**

The characteristic landscape and biodiversity will only be preserved if the area is actively farmed. The farming industry will in turn only survive if it can diversify and derive benefits from sympathetic land management. The increased interest in green tourism and regeneration of the villages in the Valley are bound to attract more visitors. However excessive visitor numbers could damage some of what makes the area distinctive. From these few examples it is evident that only by integrating the various issues and addressing the potential conflicts between the different priorities will we be able to support a sustainable and economically viable future for the local countryside.

### **[Insert map 3 admin boundaries ]**

#### **Existing strategies**

Kirklees Metropolitan Council developed a "Colne Valley Countryside Strategy" in the mid-nineties. The actions recommended within the document were only partially implemented due to lack of funds at that time, but it provides a solid base on which to build the present Integrated Management Plan.

The Standing Conference of South Pennines Authorities (SCOSPA) was a regional partnership, including all the local authorities covering the South Pennines. Its main function was to act as a consultative body to represent the interests of the South Pennines in its relationships with government, regional, national and European organisations. The key project in recent years was to produce a "Heritage Strategy for the South Pennines". This document and the South Pennines Moors "Integrated Management Strategy and Conservation Action Plan" (IMSACAP) provide a broad framework for biodiversity and heritage conservation in the South Pennines. SCOSPA has now been replaced by a not for profit company limited by guarantee, which is thought to be an effective way of attracting funds in order to finance the actions proposed in these documents.

#### ***Biodiversity Action Plans***

The area is under the umbrella of both the Peak District Biodiversity Action Plan and the Kirklees Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). The relevant recommendations in both documents are similar and have contributed to the development of detailed proposals in this Integrated Management Plan. Some of the habitats e.g. hay meadows and blanket bog and species e.g. Linnet, Song Thrush, Skylark and Brown Hare present in the Upper Colne Valley are priorities in the National Biodiversity Action Plan and, these national priorities have also been taken into account.

### ***Statutory Designations***

The international importance of the area for wildlife and especially birds has resulted in the moorland receiving statutory protection. It has been designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), a classification which identifies the most significant sites in England for wildlife, landforms and geology. Its international significance has been confirmed by the status of Special Protection Area (SPA). This status identifies European Union internationally important sites for birds under the Bird Directive. It is also a candidate Special Area of Conservation (cSAC) under the EU Habitat Directive. The protection afforded to the SSSI means that any land manager wanting to carry out works within the SSSI must seek the consent of English Nature. It also means that all public bodies must further the conservation and enhancement of the SSSI when carrying out their duties. If a public body wishes to carry out works which may damage the SSSI or allow somebody else to do so they must consult with English Nature (whether the work is inside or outside the site boundary).

### ***Rural Development***

The Upper Colne Valley is within the Pennine Rural Priority Area (PRPA) and Yorkshire Forward is the Regional Development Agency in charge of ensuring sustainable economic development for RPAs in Yorkshire. The aims of all RDAs are as follow:

- Economic development and regeneration;
- Promote business efficiency, investment and competitiveness;
- Promote employment;
- Enhance development of skills & training;
- Contribute to the achievement of sustainable development.

### ***Recreation***

The Integrated Management Strategy and Conservation Action Plan (IMSACAP) document took the view that the significance and importance of the South Pennine Moors Special Protection Area had to be protected by all possible means and the policies and action reflect this. It agreed that a filtering system should be used to try to keep recreation pressure away from vulnerable areas and positively promote the least vulnerable.

It was acknowledged that the main use would be informal recreation such as walking, mountain biking and horse riding. In respect of walkers there will always be the hardy few that will want to walk over the blanket bog, but current numbers do not have a significant impact on this habitat. The Pennine Way and a number of other recreational routes would continue to be promoted and actively maintained. The emphasis for the rest of the blanket bog would be to avoid encouraging visitors. Visitors will be encouraged away from the high moorland, to where habitats are less vulnerable.

### **Changes to Agri-environmental schemes**

Countryside Stewardship and Environmentally Sensitive Areas are the most significant programmes of financial and technical support available to farmers which try to help meet the objectives of supporting wildlife conservation and landscape quality on farmland. These are being achieved through the award of defined additional financial payments being made to undertake specific environmental actions. Over the last few years the Government has been developing a much more structured approach to environmental target setting including targets for priority species and habitats. As a result there are concerns that the existing programmes are not necessarily the most appropriate means of meeting these targets within the wider farming environment. In addition it is not unusual to find that these agri-environmental schemes overlap with other regulatory measures such as Special Protection Areas, SSSIs.

In order to try to address the concerns raised about the existing schemes and meet the need to satisfy the bio-diversity targets and achieve a more sustainable form of agriculture the Government is in the process of piloting two new forms of agri-environmental payment schemes.

The first scheme could be made available to all farmers. It would involve the making of a standard payment per hectare covering the whole of the farm area provided that certain environmental actions that benefit improvements to degraded landscapes, poor water quality and loss of dispersed species such as skylark are carried out. These actions will have to be set out in a whole farm environmental action plan. The benefit to the farmer is that the prescription requirements will not be overtly onerous as they will reflect best practise advice and administration and monitoring will be easier than the current schemes.

Under the second scheme the payment rate is much higher and will be targeted toward particular areas and environments that are deemed to be much more significant. The prescriptions for action will be much more onerous. Again they will be made on the basis of the implementation of a whole farm environmental action plan.

There are a number of farms in a range of environments through the country that are acting as pilots for both types of schemes. None of these are in the Upper Colne Valley. Once the outcomes have been evaluated a decision will be taken as to whether or not they should be universally applied and so in time replace the ESA and Countryside Stewardship payments that are currently being made.

## Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats Facing the Upper Colne Valley

### SWOT Analysis for the Upper Colne Valley

| <b>Strengths</b>   | <b>Opportunities</b>   |
|--|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Distinctive landscape character</li> <li>2. Blanket bog on fringe of distribution</li> <li>3. Breeding birds of international significance</li> <li>4. Transport remains of international significance</li> <li>5. Mesolithic flint scatters of European significance</li> </ol> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Visitors</li> <li>2. Niche marketing of agricultural products</li> <li>3. External grant aid</li> <li>4. Reform of Common Agricultural Policy</li> <li>5. Yorkshire Forward "Renaissance Market Towns" initiative</li> </ol>   |
| <b>Weaknesses</b>  | <b>Threats</b>   |
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Historic decline of farming</li> <li>2. Unsustainable farming practices</li> <li>3. Few local entrepreneurs</li> <li>4. Little potential for farm diversification</li> <li>5. Poor quality infrastructure for visitors e.g. footpaths and bed and breakfast</li> </ol>           | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Poorly targeted agricultural subsidies</li> <li>2. Atmospheric pollution and global warming</li> <li>3. External grant aid requires matched funding, which is difficult to secure</li> <li>4. Reliance of visitors on private cars</li> <li>5. Changes in the funding priorities of Yorkshire Forward</li> </ol> |

## **Vision for the Upper Colne Valley**

Our vision for the Upper Colne Valley is of a sustainable and economically active countryside, based on traditional and new enterprises, where the historical and natural environment is maintained to conserve the distinctive upland character. The stakeholders and local community are involved in the process and opportunities created for visitors to enjoy the area without damaging what they come to experience.

## ***Aims***

The aims of the Upper Colne Valley Project have been defined as follows:

- Conserve, promote and enhance the special biodiversity interest of the area
- Encourage economic vitality in the local countryside
- Encourage sustainable land management in the area
- Promote sustainable recreational use of the local countryside
- Conserve, enhance and promote the heritage and landscape assets of the area
- Ensure community involvement in the management of the area.

## ***Outputs***

The outputs to be achieved from the Plan are:

- Provide an overview of the state of the countryside in the Upper Colne Valley
- Identify key strengths and weaknesses
- Assess ongoing projects
- Highlight possible actions.
- Propose a costed work programme

That will take the form a desktop document, which can easily be updated.

## A sustainable future for the Upper Colne Valley

### BIODIVERSITY

| Specific Objective   | Issues  | Action   | Partners                              | Processes  |
|--|---|--|---------------------------------------|--|
| Protect the internationally important population of breeding birds, prioritising the nationally important population of Twite. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nationally declining Twite population associated with loss of hay meadows.</li> <li>National decline of breeding waders due to loss of unimproved pastures.</li> <li>The long term effects of ecological moorland restoration work on Golden Plover and Dunlin breeding populations is not known (increasing heather cover, reducing bare peat patches).</li> <li>Indiscriminate bracken control can destroy Twite and Winchat breeding habitat.</li> <li>Management activities can disturb breeding birds of prey.</li> </ul> | Implement recommendations from Peak District and Kirklees Biodiversity Action Plans. | All, lead KMC or PDNPA dep. on sector | Data collection on Curlew, Lapwing and Twite. Promote land management favourable to Curlew, Lapwing and Twite. Ensure that any key sites for Curlew, Lapwing and Twite are favourably managed. |
|  |   | Survey existing breeding populations of important bird species.                      | EN, KMC, NT, PDNPA                    | Commission a survey of Blanket Bog breeders i.e. Dunlin and Golden plover.   |
|  |   | Promote wildlife-friendly land management in the area.                               | EN, KMC, NT, PDNPA                    | Commission a survey of clough breeders i.e. Twite, Ring ouzel and Winchat.   |
|  |   |  | All, EN to lead                       | Partners will support EN in securing appropriate management for key areas for the above mentioned species identified by the surveys.   |
|  |   |  | DEFRA, YW                             | Maintain low management areas which are rich in seeds (especially along catch-waters and drains).  |
|  |   | KMC, NT, EN  | Publicise existing best practice.     |  |

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| Specific Objective   | Issues   | Action   | Partners              | Processes  |
|--|--|--|-----------------------|--|
| Protect and increase the area of high biodiversity value in-by-eyes (hay meadow, unimproved pasture) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hay produces less biomass than silage.</li> <li>• Hay not reliable in the area due to unpredictable weather conditions.</li> <li>• Large areas of in-by-eyes are no longer farmed.</li> <li>• In-by-eyes need to be managed.</li> <li>• Some landowners do not realise the importance of semi-natural habitats for wildlife.</li> </ul> | Survey grasslands in the area to identify species rich fields and potential threats. | KMC, EN               | Support and complete survey of grasslands in the area.   |
|  |  | Safeguard existing species rich upland meadows and unimproved pastures.              | KMC, PDNPA, DEFRA, EN | Identify areas suitable for restoration of unimproved pastures and hay meadows (owners, suitability, importance for Twite population, etc...) and produce an action plan.                    |
|  |  |  | KMC, EN, DEFRA, YW    | Monitor the existing management regimes on existing biodiversity important in-by-eyes.   |
|  |  | Increase the amount of species rich upland meadows and unimproved pastures area.     | All (DEFRA to lead)   | Increase the uptake of agri-environmental measures.  |
|  |  |  | DEFRA, NT, KMC, YW    | Establish long term favourable management regime on key in-by-eyes.  |
|  |  |  | KMC, DEFRA, PDNPA     | Encourage co-operative working and sharing of machinery for efficient hay production.  |
|  |  | Increase biodiversity in semi-improved grassland.                                    | All DEFRA to lead     | Increase the uptake of agri-environmental measures.  |
|  |  |  | KMC, EN, NT           | Provide clear information to landowners about the benefits of maintaining a hay meadow coupled with similar info for other biodiversity rich in-by-eyes through public meetings and leaflets |
|  |  |  | EN, DEFRA, PDNPA, YW  | Encourage major landowners in the area to provide incentives for their tenants to manage grassland extensively.  |
|  |  |  | KMC, EN, DEFRA        | Complete bid to LIFE nature fund to improve biodiversity in semi-natural grassland (will include research work).   |

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| Specific Objective                             | Issues   | Action   | Partners                   | Processes  |
|--|--|--|----------------------------|--|
| Improve the biodiversity value of the moorland | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Area holds national Biodiversity Action Plan habitat (blanket bog, upland woodland, dwarf shrub health).</li> <li>Moorland in poor state (large areas of Purple Moor Grass <i>Mollinia cerulea</i>, low plant diversity, large area of eroding peat).</li> <li>Active management will be very expensive over large areas.</li> <li>Over grazing by sheep.</li> <li>Atmospheric pollution.</li> <li>Uncontrolled burning.</li> <li>Some taxonomic groups poorly studied (especially insects and lower plants).</li> <li>Long term impacts of moorland restoration programmes on biodiversity are poorly studied.</li> <li>Global warning.</li> </ul> | Implement recommendations from Peak District and Kirklees Biodiversity Action Plans. | All KMC and PDNPA to lead. | Collate existing information on the state of blanket bog and fill gaps in the knowledge.<br>Define what "good condition" means for blanket bog and moorland.<br>Seek to establish favourable management conditions for all moorland in the area.   |
|  |  | Seek funding and opportunities to survey area for poorly known species groups.       | KMC, EN, NT, HU            | Seek to attract project students e.g <b>Huddersfield, Bradford, Manchester &amp; Leeds Universities</b>  |
|  |  |  | KMC, NT, EN                | Discuss opportunities for joint survey work with local natural history groups.   |
|  |  |  | KMC, NT                    | Seek to organise field meetings of key natural history groups.   |
|  |  | Preserve and improve the mosaic of diverse moorland habitats.                        | DEFRA, EN, NT, YW          | Reduce area covered by mono-specific Purple Moor Grass.<br>Establish and implement a best practice policy for the control of bracken.  |
|  |  |  | NT, EN                     | Conserve species diverse flushes.  |
|  |  | Continue re-vegetation programmes to create a diversity of habitats on the moors.    | NT, EN, DEFRA              | Agree process to sustainably manage degraded areas.<br>Priority will be protection of internationally important bird species and improving the landscape value of high visibility areas.<br>Maintain a mosaic of diverse habitats including some degraded areas.   |
|  |  | Increase public awareness of the fragility of blanket bog                            | NT, KMC                    | Provide information (leaflet, National Trust exhibit, Marsden Info Point) to visitors on the fragility of blanket bogs.<br>Seek to improve awareness within the local community of the importance of the blanket bog (internationally significant bird populations, protection of water quality, information contained within the peat, protection of internationally important archaeological sites.....) |
|  |  |  | All                        | All events organised by partners will take into account the fragility of blanket bog.  |
|  |  | Continue blanket bog recovery programme.   | NT, HU, EN                 | Continue present actions and co-ordinate with other work in the South and West Pennines.   |

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| Specific Objective  | Issues   | Action  | Partners       | Processes   |   |
|---|--|---|----------------|---|---|
| Protect and improve the general state of the few remaining semi-natural upland woodlands and selectively increase the tree cover in the Valley. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Very little woodland cover (even fewer semi-natural woodlands).</li> <li>• Last semi-natural upland woodland poorly managed (overgrazing)</li> <li>• Tree planting can have a negative impact on moorland species and farmland waders.</li> <li>• Lack of mid-successional habitats in the area.</li> </ul> | Selectively increase the area of semi natural woodland in the area. | KMC, YW, NT    | Exclude sheep from areas around existing semi-natural woodland to promote natural regeneration. |   |
|   |  |   | KMC, PDNPA, NT | Promote natural regeneration through locally sourced direct seeding techniques.                 |   |
|   |  |   | KMC            | Carry out locally sourced tree planting schemes where natural regeneration is unfeasible.       |   |
|   |  | Increase the biodiversity value of existing woodland.               | KMC, EN        | Promote woodland management to encourage the establishment of a diverse understorey flora.      |   |
|   |  |   |                | KMC, YW, DEFRA  | Reduce (or even suppress) sheep grazing in existing semi-natural woodlands. |
|   |  |   |                | KMC, NT   | Set up a nest-box scheme – <b>local youth and community groups.</b>         |

**COMMUNITY**

| <b>Specific Objective</b>  | <b>Issues</b>   | <b>Action</b>   | <b>Partners</b>   | <b>Processes</b>   |
|--|---|---|-------------------|--|
| Encourage the local community to enjoy and value the local countryside | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local countryside viewed as an asset by 97% of Marsdeners.</li> <li>18-24 age group does not go in the countryside much</li> <li>Possible conflict between use of countryside by locals and visitors.</li> </ul> | Provide information to the local community on progress of the Upper Colne Valley Project.   | All (KMC to lead) | Produce a regular column in the local media.   |
|  |   | Set up annual public meetings.  |                   |  |
|  |   | Set up information boards e.g. Marsden Information Point.   |                   |  |
|  |   | Support appropriate community countryside projects.   | All (KMC to lead) | Projects to be identified through communication with local community (see above).                |
|  |   | Encourage education programmes and events increasing knowledge of the local countryside.  | KMC, NT, PDNPA    | Support projects through identifying funding opportunities existing supporting agencies.         |
| Provide well surfaces easily followed walking routes                   | KMC, PDNPA, NT  | Support local schools by providing technical support, information and organising special events.  |                   |  |
|  | KMC   | Seek funding (and partners) to produce an education pack targeted at key stages one and two regarding the environment in the Pennines (wildlife, importance and history of farming, rural urban mosaic etc...). |                   |  |
|  |   | See Leisure.  |                   |  |
| Improve the understanding of farming by local community                | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Poor understanding of farming by many of the local community.</li> <li>Conflict due to sheep trespassing throughout the village.</li> <li>The local landscape is shaped by farming activities.</li> </ul>        | Organise interpretative field visits for the local community.   | KMC, NT, DEFRA    | Encourage and promote farm visits and countryside walks.   |
|  |   |   | KMC, NT           | Support local schools by providing technical support, information and organising special events. |

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| Specific Objective                       | Issues  | Action   | Partners                                       | Processes   |
|--|---|--|--|---|
| Reduce Sheep problem in Marsden village. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• It is not possible to fence the moors due to common land status.</li> <li>• The farmers have got the right to let their sheep wander on the common.</li> </ul> | Suggest solutions to limit the amount of damage caused by sheep.   | KMC, NT, DEFRA                                 | Liase with developers to promote the provision of secure gardens.   |
|  |   | Work with the local community to overcome problems with sheep while recognising the rights of commoners. | NT, KMC, DEFRA                                 | Organise bulk orders to fencing companies, to reduce the cost of fencing sheep out from gardens.                                |
|  |   | Help in fencing out the village from the moorland.   | DEFRA, KMC, NT                                 | Create a working group (including residents and farmers to seek solutions and funding.  |
|  |   | Encourage improvements to walling/fencing on the in-byes between moorland and village.                   | Use agri-environmental funding where possible. | Assess with Kirklees Environment and Transportation Services the scope for fencing off and positioning cattle grids on the A62. |

LEISURE

| Specific Objective   | Issues  | Action  | Partners          | Processes   |
|--|---|---|-------------------|---|
| Develop visitor management so that, users can enjoy the countryside without harming habitats and heritage features or disturbing wildlife. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Risk of damage to the local archaeology, geological features and biodiversity through an increase in visitors.</li> <li>Blanket bog especially susceptible to trampling damage (see Pennine Way).</li> <li>Risk of conflicts between traditional moorland activities (farming, shooting) and users</li> </ul>  | Ensure habitats are not damaged due to unsustainable level of leisure activities. | All               | Work with event organisers, activity providers and user groups to ensure their activities are in accordance with the carrying capacity of the habitats.   |
| Improve access to the countryside (access for all)   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The only top quality footpaths are in the Towpath and Wessenden Valley.</li> <li>Inadequate waymarking and signposting of many major footpaths.</li> <li>Lack of facilities for people with disabilities in the area.</li> <li>Poor upkeep of major sign-posted footpath in the area and related literature.</li> <li>Implementation of the CROW Act 2000 will increase the amount of accessible land.</li> <li>The status of "footpath" along Yorkshire Water catch-waters needs clarifying.</li> <li>Part of the community does not use the local countryside.</li> <li>Opportunities for new circular routes need to be identified</li> </ul> | Provide routes in the area to accomodate all levels of fitness and ability.       | KMC, NT           | Providing circular routes using the canal towpath<br>Lobby Environment and Transportation Services and work with user groups to upkeep any existing/new publicised routes.<br>Re-promote and publish leaflets for existing trails (Standedge Trail, CV circular, station to station walks...)   |
|  |   |   | KMC,NT,YW         | Develop a set of routes for less able people in consultation with South Huddersfield PCT.   |
|  |   | All actions to be socially inclusive  | All (KMC to lead) | Create a permissive footpath around Butterley Reservoir and across Wessenden bank.  |
|  |   |   |                   | Link with other bodies and networks who work to increase the use of the countryside by socially excluded groups.<br>Work with local community to identify and remove any barriers which may be preventing them from visiting and enjoying the countryside.<br><br>Promote "health walks" as part of the existing Kirklees contribution to the "Walking the Way to Health" initiative. |

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| Specific Objective   | Issues   | Action  | Partners           | Processes  |
|--|--|---|--------------------|--|
| Support appropriate leisure activities in the countryside and minimise conflicts between user groups.  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of a bridleway network.</li> <li>• Illegal "leisure" activities (motorbikes etc.....)</li> <li>• Differing carrying capacities of local habitats.</li> <li>• Walkers, cyclist, horse rider conflicts.</li> <li>• Ramblers/Grouse shoot conflict.</li> <li>• Problems caused by antisocial activities.</li> </ul> | Create a user group forum.  | KMC, NT, YW, PDNPA | Re-launch the Colne Valley Countryside Forum and broaden its scope and membership, and encourage major landowners to participate in the Forum. |
|  |  | Consider improvements and extensions to the bridleway network in addition to current plans. | KMC                | Support user groups in the improvement of the Bridleway network in the area.   |
|  |  | Support appropriate countryside activities in the area.                                     | All (KMC to lead)  | Identify existing provision, assess condition and needs.   |
|  |  | Seek to decrease the amount of illegal and antisocial activities taking place in the area.  |                    | Assist user groups in funding bids.  |
|  |  |   |                    | Promote countryside activities in the area.  |
| Link with user groups to minimise problems which may arise from their activities (limiting frequency of use, redirect damaging activities to suitable sites, getting user groups to contribute to repairs...). |  |   |                    |  |
| Link with Police to monitor level of crime/illegal activity and increase the level of action in the field.   |  |   |                    |  |

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| Specific Objective  | Issues   | Action   | Partners  | Processes   |
|---|--|--|---|---|
| Encourage visitors to benefit the local economy through increasing their spend and creating economic opportunities. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of signage directing visitors towards the village centre shops.</li> <li>Very limited range of accommodation.</li> <li>Quality of B&amp;Bs in the area needs to be ensured.</li> </ul> | Promote sustainable countryside activities in the area.  | KMC, NT   | Assist the development of potential countryside related leisure activity in the area (range of walking opportunities, riding holidays linked to improvements to the bridleway network, better range of accommodation, outdoor pursuits...). |
|   |  | Seek to guarantee the quality of the experience of visitors to the area.                               | KMC   | Promote and support initiatives to encourage visitors to stay and spend locally.  |
|   |  | Provide better information on facilities in the village to countryside visitors.                       | KMC   | Encourage local accommodation providers to register with the Local Authority (financial help and/or get rebates for small B&Bs etc...)  |
| Promote the use of public transport to reach and to move about within the area                                      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Bus routes not adapted to visitors needs within the area.</li> <li>Few trains on Sunday.</li> <li>Public tend to prefer using their own transport.</li> </ul>                               | Increase the use of public transport to reach and explore the area.                                    | All to support KMC  | Review current signposting and carry out improvements for the benefits of visitors and the local community.   |
|   |  | Seek to improve the provision of public transport for the benefit of the local community and visitors. | KMC   | Produce a leaflet highlighting public transport as a mean of visiting the local countryside, include comprehensive details of public transport in "Wild about Kirklees" and NT publications.  |
|   |  |  |   | Limit the amount of unmanaged parking areas along roads in the moorland   |
|   |  |  | Improve existing managed car parks (better surfacing, info boards etc...)   |   |
|   |  |  | Always publicise the possible use of public transport when advertising an event or an activity in the area.   |   |
|   |  |  | Ensure that organised countryside events and activities are accessible by public transport.   |   |
|   |  |  | Identify opportunities to improve public transport links with surrounding urban areas.  |   |
|   |  |  | Seek to provide regular moorland buses in the summer linking Marsden and the surrounding moorland (linkup existing rural buses and/or provide a circular route linking Marsden, Diggle, Greenfield and Holmfirth) |   |

**RURAL DEVELOPMENT**

| Specific Objective   | Issues  | Action  | Partners          | Processes  |
|--|---|---|-------------------|--|
| Seek Opportunities to support local produce  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of Pennine lamb brand.</li> <li>Upland lamb is not very popular with British public, as the meat of upland breed is too fat.</li> <li>Hard to develop a range of produce, as only cattle and lamb are produced</li> </ul> | Support "Made in Yorkshire", "Yorkshire Pantry" and "Protected Landscape" initiatives                                     | KMC, DEFRA, PDNPA | Collaborate with other organisations (SCOSPA, NFU...) and link with existing projects "Eat the View", New Environmental Economy "Made in Yorkshire", Kirklees and Calderdale Food Futures and Grassroots Food Network. |
|  |   |   | KMC, DEFRA        | Continue to explore opportunities for niche marketing of local produce.  |
|  |   | Encourage local businesses to use local produce.  | KMC, DEFRA        | Provide information to the local catering industry encourage and support farm shops.   |
|  |   |   | KMC               | Support and assist "Farmers Market" proposals.   |
| Protect and manage the local heritage landscape & biodiversity so they benefit the local economy   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The Upper Colne Valley suffers from a dark mill town image.</li> <li>Some of the assets have a poor image with the general public, moorland sometimes being viewed as bleak and unfriendly.</li> </ul>                         | Research the importance of visitors and the environment for the local economy in order to base our work on economic facts | KMC and HU        | Initiate visitor survey.   |
|  |   |   |                   | Initiate business survey.  |
|  |   | Strengthen the image of the Upper Colne Valley, within the 'Pennine Yorkshire' tourism strategy.                          | KMC, NT, BW       | Promote projects as part of the Yorkshire Forward "Rural Renaissance" initiative.  |
|  |   |   |                   | Initiate a survey to assess the impact of the environment on economic development.   |
| Identify training needs and mechanisms to provide the local workforce with the skills required to manage the countryside in a sustainable way. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Skills of the local workforce inappropriate to the new economy.</li> <li>Little funding available at present to support employment in this area.</li> </ul>  | Identify training needs in the area.  | KMC               | Assess current needs to implement IMP and identify gaps.   |
|  |   |   | KMC, NT           | Support and continue existing schemes – NT & KMC Countryside Volunteers and Careership Wardens.  |
|  |   | Work with existing successful organisations to support and organise training schemes in countryside skills.               | KMC               | Seek to provide specific training courses in areas not covered by others through networking and developing existing.   |

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| Specific Objective  | Issues   | Action   | Partners | Processes   |
|---|--|--|----------|---|
| Maximise and diversify the funding in the Upper Colne Valley for regeneration and environmental enhancement | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of a body within the partnership to channel funds into the area (local authority limited in which funds it can access)</li> <li>• Lack of co-ordinated approach to funding bids.</li> <li>• Changes in the funding process from Yorkshire Forward, the main source of finance for rural development in area.</li> <li>• Farmers and “entrepreneurs” often view the funding application process as too complex and time consuming.</li> </ul> | Work with other adjoining and larger area bodies to access money available for larger projects and develop "Central Pennines"- wide projects                                     | All      | Maintain and develop existing links with surrounding bodies and local authorities to help deliver the IMP.  |
|   |  | Assist existing and new businesses to obtain the help available to them and assist the creation of new countryside related businesses (green tourism, habitat management etc...) | KMC      | Raise awareness among local businesses of existing opportunities.<br>Seek to provide outreach services in Marsden.  |
|   |  | Maximise the amount of funds available for the project   | All      | Identify a body in the partnership to act as a funnel for funding.<br>Maximise the use of existing opportunities and facilities.<br>Partners to inform, and when possible involve, other partners when completing funding bids. |

**LAND MANAGEMENT**

| <b>Specific Objective</b>  | <b>Issues</b>  | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Partners</b>           | <b>Processes</b>  |
|--|--|--|---------------------------|---|
| Ensure that local reservoirs are managed in sympathy with the local landscape and biodiversity.    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The reservoirs need to fulfil their primary functions.</li> <li>Any changes must not affect water quality</li> </ul>  | Survey reservoir and catch-waters to assess value for biodiversity and propose improvements and best practices compatible with their primary function. | YW, BWW, NT               | Study biodiversity value of present reservoir and catch waters.   |
|  |  |  |                           | Assess possible improvements for biodiversity with regard to their primary functions and other land owners.             |
| Support sustainable approach to farming and biodiversity sympathetic farming techniques            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Long-term decline in farming in the area with most farming enterprises in the area unsustainable.</li> <li>Many components of the local biodiversity depend on sympathetic farming.</li> <li>Some "hobby farmers" and horse owners are unaware of management techniques and livestock requirements.</li> <li>The intensification of grassland management techniques has adverse effects on biodiversity.</li> </ul> | Encourage full and part time farmers to take up agri environmental measures.   | DEFRA                     | See biodiversity section.   |
|  |  | Provide "hobby farmers" and horse owners with information of best management practices.  | DEFRA, KMC                | Organise forum meetings to publicise the ESA and CSS payments as well as the value of extensive management to wildlife. |
|  |  |  |                           | Link farmers with organisations providing help with Agri-Environmental applications.                                    |
|  |  | Encourage sustainable activities and provide example of good practices.  | See biodiversity section. |   |
| Support sustainable farm diversification consistent with National Park and Green Belt designation. | DEFRA  | Encourage farmers take full advantage of existing schemes.   |                           |   |
|  |  | Link up farmers with sources of funding and help.  |                           |   |

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| Specific Objective   | Issues   | Action   | Partners           | Processes   |
|--|--|--|--------------------|---|
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Countryside Stewardship applications are very complex and time consuming to fill in especially in the uplands and some farmers are reluctant to commit themselves for 10 years.</li> <li>• Little scope for crop diversification.</li> <li>• Some farmers not aware of free business help available to them.</li> </ul> |  |                    |   |
| Support more effective and sustainable moorland management | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Common land makes it difficult for agri-environmental measures (i.e. all commoners need to agree).</li> <li>• Burning traditionally viewed as a good management technique for moorland.</li> </ul>  | Collaborate with farmers to provide varied grazing regimes to suit the needs of different key species in the area. | DEFRA, KMC, EN, NT | See biodiversity section.   |
|  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Moorland grazing will only be sustainable with very low stocking densities.</li> <li>• Diverse grazing regimes needed to maintain habitat mosaic.</li> </ul>  | Encourage local shooting syndicates to manage their shoots more sustainably.                                       | DEFRA, NT, EN      | Explore grant opportunities to support sustainable management and encourage the use of agri-environmental measures.<br>Provide technical help for the management of the moorland.<br>Publicise existing best practice examples. |

**LANDSCAPE AND HERITAGE**

| <b>Specific Objective</b>   | <b>Issues</b>   | <b>Action</b>  | <b>Partners</b>        | <b>Processes</b>   |
|---|---|--|------------------------|--|
| Value the archaeology and the cultural heritage of the area in the way it is managed. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little or no interpretation for most remains.</li> <li>• Some important features not always identified as important remains (i.e. quarries).</li> <li>• Interpretation where required needs to be integrated within the landscape.</li> <li>• Information can lead to vandalism and attract unscrupulous collectors.</li> <li>• Landscape and heritage features are some times regarded as a problem by landowners (cost of maintenance, more bureaucracy etc...).</li> <li>• National curriculum needs to be taken into account.</li> </ul> | Survey archaeology and cultural heritage in order to identify important remains, prioritise actions and develop a strategy | KMC                    | Review existing data to identify gaps in knowledge<br>Seek funding towards a desk-based survey of available information by West Yorkshire Archawlogy, leading to better knowledge of future research priorities....<br>Produce an integrated local interpretation strategy.  |
|   |   | Provide interpretation of the most interesting archaeological remains.   | All KMC                | Re-edit the Standedge Guide and update and re-launch the Standedge Trail   |
|   |   | Assist land owners to realise the value for biodiversity, landscape and heritage of their assets.                          | KMC, NT                | Support local groups e.g. the Huddersfield Canal Society in providing interpretation within the defined strategy   |
|   |   |  | KMC, NT, YW, PDNPA, EN | Encourage local landowners to value well-maintained walls around their property.   |
|   |   |  | EN KMC                 | Contact and inform landowners using EN news letter of the value of their assets.   |
|   |   |  | KMC                    | Assist management and conservation of archaeological remains and local heritage features (funding, contact with relevant organisation such as English Heritage or West Yorkshire Archaelogy).  |
| Maintain evidence of the traditional walled enclosure system                          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• General state of disrepair of dry stone walls.</li> <li>• Wire fences more cost effective in the short term.</li> <li>• Cost of building dry stone walls.</li> <li>• Stone theft.</li> <li>• Helping private owners increase the value of their house/land is controversial.</li> <li>• No base data on the heritage, grazing management and landscape value of the different enclosure system in the area.</li> </ul>   | Survey local dry stone walls to identify the most important so as to prioritise restoration and maintenance work.          |                        | Commission survey of dry stone walls to assess the historical, heritage landscape and livestock management value of the enclosure network.<br>Identify threats & prioritise restoration and maintenance works<br>Encourage the uptake of Angri environmental payments.<br>Link with reducing the problem of "stray sheep".<br>Encourage local landowners to value well-maintained walls around their property. |



## **Glossary**

### **Agenda 21**

Agenda 21 is a global programme agreed at the Rio Earth Summit in 1992. All local authorities around the world are committed to drawing up plans for sustainability and encouraging wide participation in the debate.

### **Anaerobic**

Organisms living in the absence of free oxygen. In the case of a soil, when it is in an airless state, notably waterlogged.

### **Biodiversity**

Biological diversity - "Biodiversity" - is the variety of life on earth. It is nature's variety of species, habitats and whole ecological systems. Human society's interaction with biodiversity shows whether our economic and social development is sustainable.

### **Biomass**

The amount of chemical energy contained in a group of growing plants at any given time.

### **Blanket Bog**

A bog formed under conditions of frequent, high rainfall, swathing the whole land surface where it is relatively horizontal.

### **Bronze Age**

A major phase in the development of man's culture, succeeding the Palaeolithic, Mesolithic and Neolithic.

### **Catchment**

Area drained by a single river; a natural drainage area which coincides with a drainage basin.

### **Climate**

The total complex of weather conditions, its average characteristics and range of variations over an appreciable area of the earth's surface.

### **Community (vegetation)**

A group of plants growing in a particular area, usually of distinctive character, and requiring certain physical conditions which satisfy them.

## Ecology

The science of the mutual relationship of organisms to their environment.

## Flush

An area of minerally enriched soil.

## Gritstone

A coarse sandstone, usually massive, with grains of uneven size, probably a compacted marine deltaic deposit.

## Habitat

An area in which the requirements of a specific animal or plant are met.

## Mesolithic

The Middle Stone Age, from 4,000 to 10,000BC, characterised by the use of microlithic implements.

## Moorland

Strictly an upland area of siliceous rocks, such as gritstone, where acid peat (derived from sphagnum, cotton sedge, purple moor-grass) has accumulated under damp conditions.

## Neolithic

The "New Stone Age", a culture period following the Mesolithic from the latter part of the 4<sup>th</sup> millennium BC until the onset of the Bronze Age.

## Peat

Partially decomposed vegetable matter, dark brown or black, accumulated under water logged (anaerobic) conditions.

## Plateau

An upland with a more or less uniform summit level, sometimes bounded by slopes falling steeply away.

## Special Area of Conservation (cSAC)

Sites identified under the EU Habitat Directive

Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI)

A classification which identifies the most significant sites in England for wildlife, landforms and geology.

Special Protection Area (SPA)

This status identifies European Union internationally important sites for birds under the Bird Directive.

Succession

A gradual sequence of changes or phases in vegetation over a period of time.

Sustainable Development

Sustainable development is about creating a better quality of life for everyone, now and for generations to come. It encompasses environmental, social and economic goals.

Valley

An elongated depression sloping towards the sea or an inland drainage basin, usually though not always occupied by a river.

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## **Appendix 1**

### ***List of organisations and individuals consulted***

1. Cllr Gordon Beever, Kirklees Metropolitan Council
2. Cllr Margaret Fearnley, Kirklees Metropolitan Council
3. Cllr John Green, Kirklees Metropolitan Council
4. Cllr David Ridgway, Kirklees Metropolitan Council
5. Action for Rural Rights Of Way
6. British Dragonfly Society
7. BSBI
8. Cardinals Wheelchair Sports Club
9. Colne River Project
10. Colne Valley Beagles
11. Colne Valley Society
12. Colne Valley Local History Group
13. Colne Valley Saddle Club
14. Colne Valley Tree Society
15. Colne Valley Society
16. Colne Valley Trust
17. Federation of Disability Sports Organisations
18. Holme Valley Moorland Rescue Team
19. Huddersfield & District Archaeological Society
20. Huddersfield & District Group Ramblers Association
21. Huddersfield Birdwatchers' Club
22. Huddersfield Canal Society
23. Huddersfield Climbing Club
24. Huddersfield CTC
25. Huddersfield Star Wheelers
26. Kirklees Bridleways Group
27. Kirklees Countryside Volunteers
28. Kirklees Sports Association for the Disabled
29. Marsden Community Association
30. Marsden Enhancement Committee
31. Marsden Garden & Allotments Association
32. Marsden Mechanics Hall Steering Committee

33. Meltham & District Civic Society
34. Meltham Action Team
35. Meltham Town Council
36. Milnsbridge Naturalists' Society
37. Meltham Shoot
38. National Farmers Union
39. National Trust Volunteers
40. Pennines Soaring Club
41. RSPB - Huddersfield and Halifax Members Group
42. Slaithwaite Community Association
43. Slaithwaite Environmental Group
44. South Kirklees Rural Partnership Project
45. Standedge Visitor Centre
46. The Yorkshire Society
47. West Yorkshire Bat Group
48. Yorkshire Mountaineering Club
49. Yorkshire Naturalist Union
50. Yorkshire Wildlife Trust

## **Appendix 2**

### ***List of partner organisations***

English Nature

Pennine Rural Development Programme

Yorkshire Water

The National Trust

Peak District National Park Authority

Kirklees Metropolitan Council

DEFRA

Environment Agency

University of Huddersfield

British Waterways