

Water Environment Improvements Project Evidence Form

Scope & Purpose

This form is to be used by the external Water Environment Governance Group (WEGG), to review, validate and formally approve the length of bluespaces improved for the Water Environment Improvements ODI. The form will be completed by the Water Environment Team with support from project partners and presented to the WEGG. After formal approval, the km of water environment improved will be recorded against the ODI and projects will be marked as completed on the Water Environment Scorecard and illustrated as delivered in the Bluespaces Mapping Portals.

Project Name

Living Limekiln Gill

Project Lead

Company/ Organisation	Named Lead	Position
Durham County Council	Louise Harrington	SeaScapes Beach Care Officer

Water Environment Improved (NWG use only)

Year	Claimed	Proposed	Reason For Any Change
Year 3	2.4km	2.4km	N/A

Water Environment Assurance

This project has been reviewed internally to ensure it has delivered benefits above and beyond our baseline and regulatory obligations to improve the water environment accessible to customers across at least two out of three aspects. Following our assurance process, the project was approved by both our internal and external groups for review before delivery. This form presents evidence of project completion and the outputs achieved, to request project sign off.

Level	Project Acceptance Date	Project Approval Date	Completed Project Sign Off Date
Project Team	February 2022	N/A	N/A
Water Environment Steering Group (Internal)	March 2022	March 2022	N/A
Water Environment Governance Group (External)	March 2022	March 2022	May 2023

Project Timescales

Candidate Project Approved	Project Initiated	Project Completed
March 2022	March 2022	March 2023

Project Summary and Highlights

Summary:

This project has worked to revitalise 2.4 km of bluespaces in Limekiln Gill and the coastal area, focusing on providing solutions to deter fly-tipping at the reserve, preventing pollutants from entering the stream, improving stream water quality. A variety of tasks have been delivered through the SeaScapes Landscape Partnership, working closely with Durham County Council's Countryside Team. Activities include removing litter from the stream and beach, re-profiling an existing earth bund, renewing fencing, the creation of a small pond, and the planting of appropriate wetland species. A series of events and community engagement activities have taken place through the year.

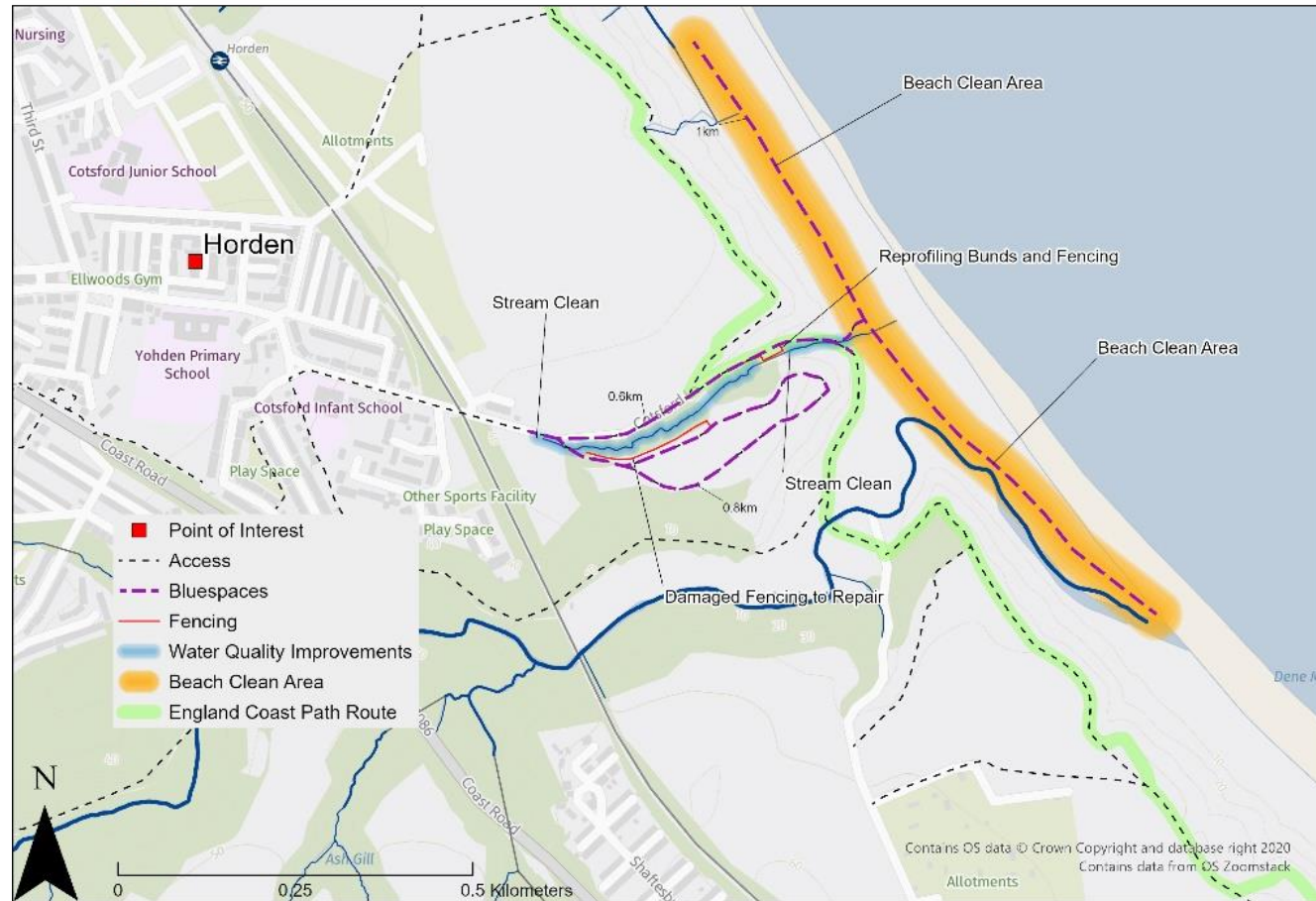
Highlights:

- Litter picks and engagement of new volunteers has ensured locals become stewards of the area and regularly get involved in community groups, as well as being committed to regularly collecting rubbish from the stream, road and beach. Volunteers are linked to DCC's Clean and Green Team and report fly-tipping incidents.
- A new pond/wetland area was created in the dene using a mini digger to excavate and reprofile the area in January 2023. Reeds (*Phragmites australis*) from a nearby wetland clearance have been excavated and replanted in the dene.
- A Series of 'leaky dams' have been installed using old fencing material and new fencing has been installed and the bund improved to deter off road bikes and make fly-tipping into the stream more difficult.
- New fencing has been erected around the car park to deter fly-tipping entering the stream.
- Landscaping and profiling of the existing car park has included the creation of a bund to stop off-road bikes destroying the dene and shoreline.
- A new fence has replaced the old dilapidated and dangerous fence, making the area more attractive.
- New bins for dog waste have been installed and new signage is due to be installed later in 2023.



Maps


Living Limekiln Gill



Total Length of Bluespaces: 2.4km

Figure 1: Bluespaces improved at Limekiln Gill

Project Outputs, Benefits & Evidence Against Criteria

Access, Facilities & Recreation	
Expected Project Outcomes	Benefits
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. This project will increase water environment access and engagement opportunities for residents and visitors: Limekiln Gill will become more attractive; currently the area is untidy and has an air of neglect. Aesthetic improvements here will encourage access to Horden Beach and the coast. 2. Visitors will have increased visibility of the stream after scrub clearance linked to biodiversity improvements. 3. The new pond offers an opportunity to engage with nature 4. Work with local schools to deliver the project will help promote positive environmental behaviours through educating the next generation on the importance of a healthy water environment 5. A series of guided walks will be offered to residents covering areas from Horden to Limekiln Gill to promote nature engagement, health and well-being 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A1: Increases access to, engagement with and enjoyment of the water environment ➤ A2: Benefits health and wellbeing through: ➤ A3: Influences positive environmental behaviors
Outputs	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Several litter picks in the dene have taken place. DCC have removed larger items from the bottom of LKG making it more attractive and revealing the stream and undergrowth. 2. Stream now visible from the roadway after litter removal and some scrub clearance in the Gill. Further down towards the sea scrub clearance has made way for appropriate tree planting. 3. The new pond has encouraged visitors to look down onto the stream and new pond. Once the reed grow the pond will attract a variety of species. 4. Local schools have been involved and will continue to be part of the development of the site. Activities included the second part of a creative workshop where young people collect then photograph the material they find for an exhibition. 5. Working with the Heritage Coast Partnership, this project will link into further work in the surrounding area. The new Connecting the Coast project aims to connect people to the coast. Walk leaflets will be produced by HCP which will be distributed in local libraries and community centre, as well as online. The area will be promoted to health groups. A 4 mile guided walk was held on 18th March 2023 – exploring the heritage of Horden and the nature of the coastal gills in conjunction with the National Trust. Attended by 15 people 	
Evidence	
 <p>Local residents are now key volunteers looking after the site, community litter pick with representatives from local business and DCC Countryside Ranger</p>	

Wildlife & Biodiversity

Expected Project Outcomes

1. Biodiversity will be enhanced through the creation of a small pond and the planting of appropriate wetland species
2. A section of the reserve will be planted with trees and scrub (approx. 100), to diversify the site and provide a buffer to protect the watercourse from litter as well as encouraging a wider variety of wildlife

Benefits

- B1: Improves the quantity, quality and connectivity of habitats
- B2: Improves the conservation status and or abundance or distribution of species

Outputs

1. The pond has been created alongside a series of leaky dams, designed to temporarily store water by holding it back within the stream's channel. Scrub that was removed near the pond has been used as habitat piles.
2. Issues with supply have delayed this aspect. Trees have been sourced and will be planted in a recently cleared area in Winter 2023. The trees will provide shelter and an extra food source for a variety of animals and birds.





Evidence



Newly excavated pond using mini digger



Volunteers planting reeds in pond and surrounding wetland area

Water Quality	
Expected Project Outcomes	Benefits
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Pollution introduced into the stream from fly-tipping will be reduced, helping to improve the water quality and flow of the stream – this will be monitored by volunteers provided with appropriate citizen science training and water testing equipment 2. The visual appearance of the watercourse will be improved through the removal of litter and habitat enhancements in the surrounding area 3. Monthly Beach Cleans will take place on Horden Beach through the SeaScapes Beach Care and Aware project, with a linked ambition to set up a community-led local group in Horden to continue beach and stream cleans into the future 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ C1: Reduces pollutants entering waters from point or diffuse sources ➤ C3: Improves state and function of water, including naturalisation, visual appearance, litter and odour
Outputs	
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The new fencing and bunding will prevent fly-tipping entering the stream. Local volunteers monitor the site and are in regular contact with DCC's Clean and Green team to report any fly-tipping, which is quickly collected to avoid pollution incidents. The Countryside Ranger is working with various officers within DCC to look into the problem of fly-tipping and deterrents to stop ASB such as camera's, increased patrols. 2. Litter has been removed and the area is continually being tidied up by volunteers. This is an ongoing process. By doing regular clean ups less litter will enter the stream and the marine environment. 3. Beach cleans ongoing. Local volunteer is a trained is run beach cleans with groups and will start collecting data for Marine Conservation Society in March 2023 after receiving training. 	
Evidence	
 	
<p>Local business taking part in beach clean, new fencing to deter fly-tipping and off-road bikes damaging habitats</p>	
 	
<p>New fencing around car park leading up the road screening off fly-tipping hotspots, new dog waste bin located on the right</p>	

Additional & Secondary Benefits

Expected Project Outcomes	Benefits
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Local groups and individuals will be able to use the area in safety, and the removal and reduction of fly tipping will promote a sense of ownership and pride for the reserve 2. This project will help deliver against SeaScapes and Heritage Coast Partnership goals, and work towards Durham County Council's Countryside Objectives and the Durham Heritage Coast Management Plan 2018 – 2025 vision statement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ D2: Provides benefits to local communities, the local economy or NWG ➤ D3: Supports strategic project or investment into strategic partnership or landscape/regional activity

Outputs

1. Local groups have become aware of LKG and are keen to explore. The SeaScapes Team will continue to work with local groups and organise walks and talks about the area and the coast.
2. The project has delivered SeaScapes and Heritage Coast Partnership goals, and work towards Durham County Council's Countryside Objectives and the Durham Heritage Coast Management Plan 2018 – 2025 vision statement

Evidence



Walkers enjoying Horden beach

Customer Testimonies & Media

“Lime Kiln Gill at Horden was an eyesore. A mess of fly-tipping, tyres and general rubbish. The new and much sturdier fence has made a great difference and will hopefully be a deterrent to fly-tipping. The dene itself looks so much better following the recent spring clean and make-over by Seascales, DCC Ranger and volunteers. A rewarding and enjoyable January morning was spent clearing rubbish and helping to plant reeds next to the ponds”

Jane Fullard – Seascales volunteer, Horden resident

Lead Partner Quotes & Testimonials

“The works funded by NWL has created a warmer welcome to the coast and is already deterring fly tipping at this location. The community has been involved, creating a sense of ownership which is so important for a site like this and we look forward to seeing the biodiversity flourish with the new pond, noticing the changes through the seasons.”

Alex Kaars Sijpesteijn, Heritage Coast Officer

“The funding from Northumbrian Water and SeaScales has allowed us to create a pond / wetland area with a smaller pond created up stream for Phragmites reed planting. New fencing has created a car park boundary and lower section of gill fenced to prevent fly tipping. A series of community litter picks and beach cleans has helped us improve the area and engage with the local community. The Countryside Ranger will carry out weekly checks and litter picks in the area. Future tree planting to be carried out, as well as further reed planting and litter picks with volunteers and Ranger). New signage is expected to be installed in the summer.”

John Olley, Countryside Ranger, Durham County Council

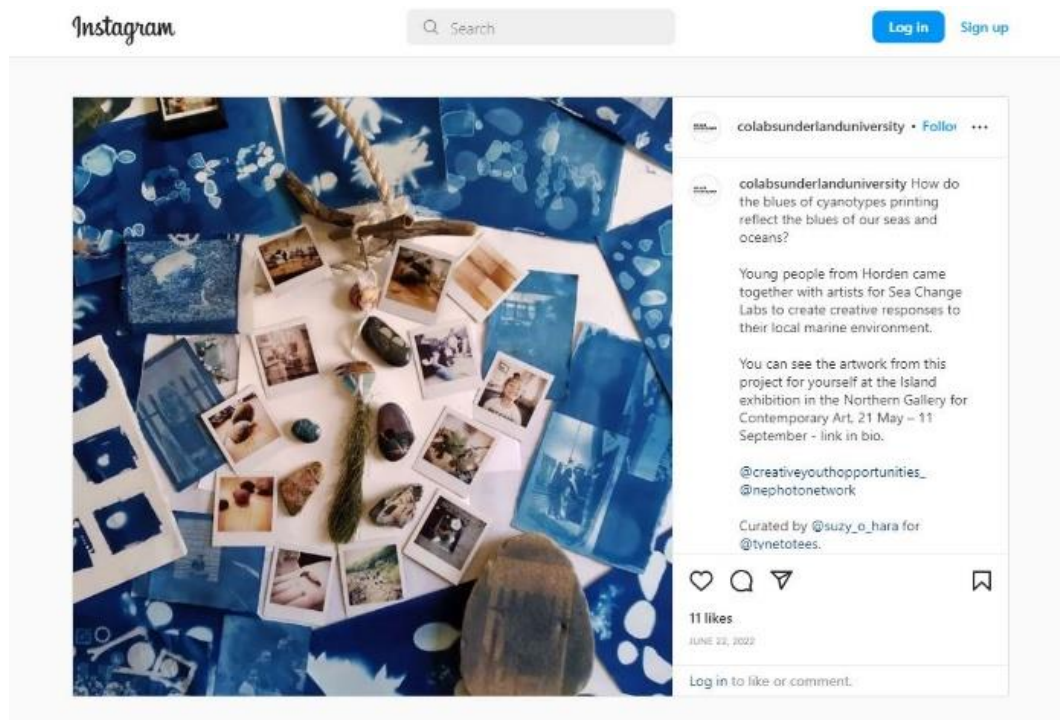
“With funding from Northumbrian Water we have helped to create a warm, welcoming gateway to the Durham Coast. The area now looks looked after and well kept. The ponds are flourishing and will continue to be monitored throughout the year. The local residents are pleased with how the area looks and are interested in looking after the ponds. The reeds will help improve water quality and fly tipping deterrents will reduce pollution entering the watercourse and the marine environment “

SeaScales Partnership

Other Supporting Evidence

Highlighted litter pick and engagement activities:

- New Volunteers meeting with litter pick on 7th May 2022. Met with 2 new volunteers who live locally to LKG. They have become and also collect rubbish from the stream, road and beach. They have contact with DCC's clean and green and report fly-tipping incidents.
- Community beach clean and litter pick around LKG 1st June 2022. Beach clean and art-based event with 15 children from local youth group, looking at litter and taking photographs/videos for an exhibition at Sunderland Glass Centre.
- SeaScapes Volunteer Beach Clean Leaders litter pick 31st July 2022. Litter pick with SeaScapes volunteers. 15 bags of rubbish collect from beach, car park and surrounding area.
- Litter pick and beach clean with students from New College. 22nd September 2022. Beach clean with students from New College in Durham as part of their environmental volunteering remit. 5 bags of rubbish collected from the beach, stream and car parking area.



Cynotypes created from material from Horden Beach