The Irwell Pilot

Improving rivers and land in the Irwell Catchment

The Plan

Version 1 March 2012

The River Medlock at Clayton Vale 19??

Need to get copyright permission to use old photos

Summary

To add

Contents

To add

Introducing the Irwell Pilot

We all love our rivers. They are the lifeblood of our country. They've shaped our landscape. Our towns and cities have been designed around them. They give us the water we need for our daily lives, provide a place to have fun, connect with nature and sustain our wildlife.

Despite significant improvements in water quality many of our rivers remain in a poor condition often as a legacy of mans past activities. But how often do we think about how we use water in our homes or businesses affects the water in our local river? Or how the pollutants we put down our drains harms our local water environments? There is likely to be less water available for people and businesses in the future. This will have a knock-on effect on the natural world around our rivers.

In 2011 Defra appointed the Environment Agency and a number of other organisations to lead 25 pilot projects across the country aimed at exploring better ways to engage with people and businesses to help improve the water environment. The Irwell Catchment is one of these pilots.

The Irwell Pilot aims to bring together organisations from the public, private and civil sectors, local communities and interest groups, to develop a shared understanding of what the problems are in the Irwell Catchment, how they should be tackled and how we can work together to get the best for our rivers and the land associated with them.

We all have a stake in making sure our rivers are clean and healthy – for the sake of our environment, our wellbeing, our wildlife. We should all cherish our rivers, look after them, want the best for them – and that's something we can all do every day.

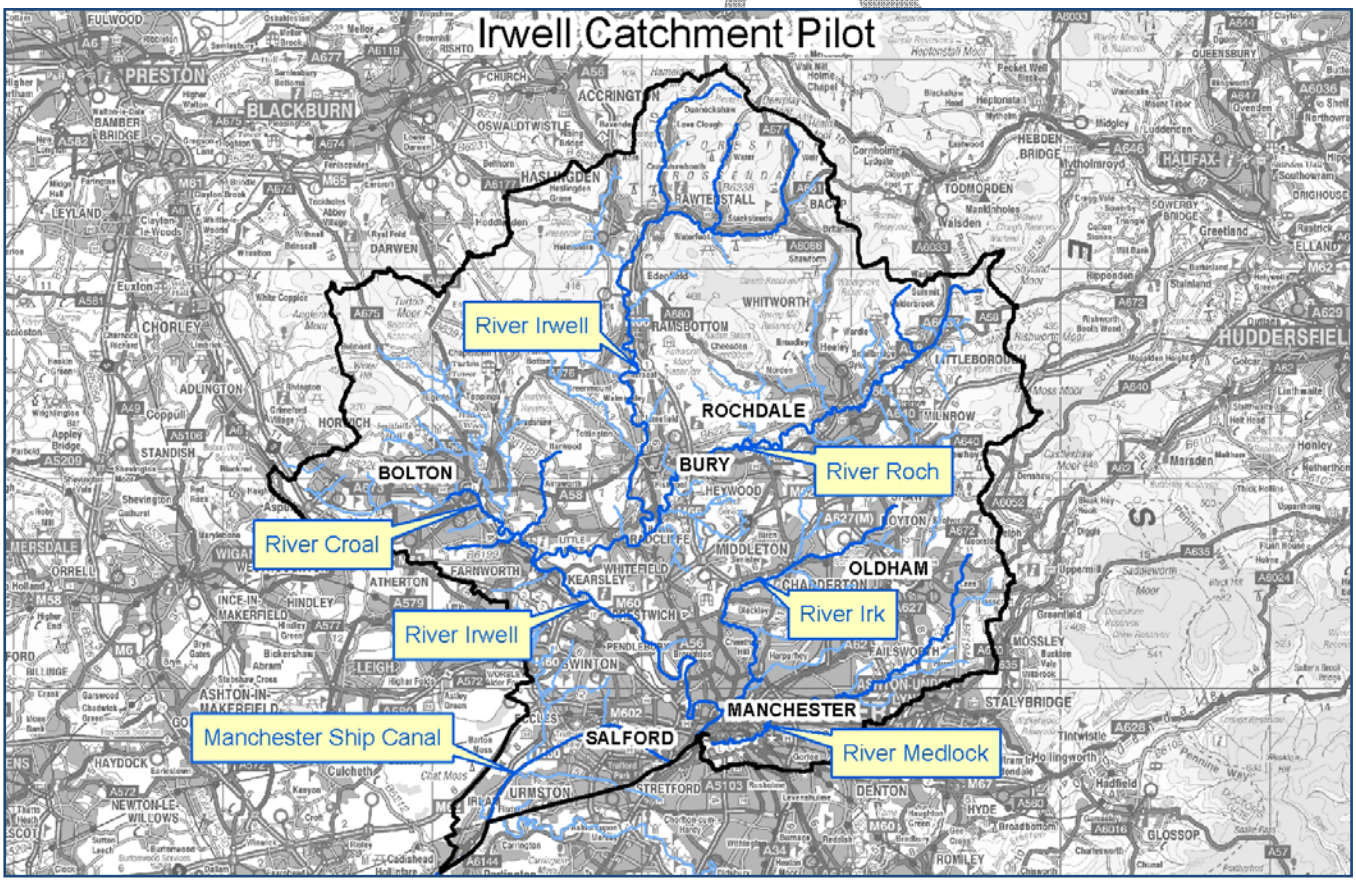
Where is the Irwell ?

The Irwell Pilot encompasses the hydrological catchment area of the rivers Croal, Irwell, Roch, Irk and Medlock and their tributaries (Fig 1). Most of these rivers currently fail to meet the required standards for water quality as defined under current UK and European legislation (Water Framework Directive).

There is a lot of work being carried out to improve our rivers but making the most of them can only be achieved if many people and organisations come together to tackle the problems collectively.

a bit more info needed here

Fig 1



Some facts and figures

In the Irwell Catchment :-

- There are 35 rivers with a total length of approximately 396 km
- There are 29 lakes/reservoirs with a total surface area of approximately 4.5km^2
- There are 5 canals
- There are 3 groundwater aquifers.
- The approximate population is 1,266,990
- The main sewage treatment works are at Rossendale, Belmont, Bury, Bolton, Salford, Eccles, Davyhulme, and Urmston.
- There is one significant industrial discharge from MEL Chemicals at Swinton.
- Land use varies and includes pasture and heather moorland dissected by narrow, steep sided valleys to the north, rough grazing and improved pastures, quarries and mill lodges further downstream, through to the flatter, low lying land and heavily urbanized area in the south.
- Xx% of area is in the top xx% of index of multiple deprivation
- Unemployment is XX
- X% of waterbodies (rivers, lakes, etc) fail to reach the standard required under current environmental legislation.
- Salmon, once found in the Irwell, are now absent from the river.
- An additional 90 000 new homes proposed by 2021, will mean this area is set to see the highest level of housing growth in the North West
- There are XXXX amount of properties at risk of flooding
- There are XX SSSI's associated with river, xx of which are not in favourable condition

Main environmental issues

The main impacts on water quality, it's ecology and the value of the surrounding environment in the Irwell Catchment are;

- pollution running off roads and land
- sewage inputs;
- man-made modifications to the river channel;
- Invasive non-native species
- poor access.
- continued development

Taking an Outcome focus

Add something about focusing on those hard to do things (not day job). Might be worth expanding on day job stuff and what its delivering e.g. regulation, AMP etc?

Ten outcomes (Appendix 1) were derived from talking to a number of interested organisations and people about what they want to achieve in relation to water quality and water environments. These were further developed at a workshop held in November 2011. A Steering Group was subsequently established to set about developing a delivery plan.

The Steering Group consists of representatives from:-

- Association of Greater Manchester Authorities
  www.agma.gov.uk
- Environment Agency
  www.environment-agency.gov.uk
- Greater Manchester Waste Disposal Authority
  www.gmwda.gov.uk
- Irwell River Trust
- Keep Britain Tidy
  www.keepbritaintidy.org
- Lancashire Wildlife Trust
  www.lancswt.org.uk
- Red Rose Forest
  www.redroseforest.co.uk
- Salford Friendly Anglers
  www.salfordfriendlyanglers.co.uk
- United Utilities
  www.unitedutilities.com

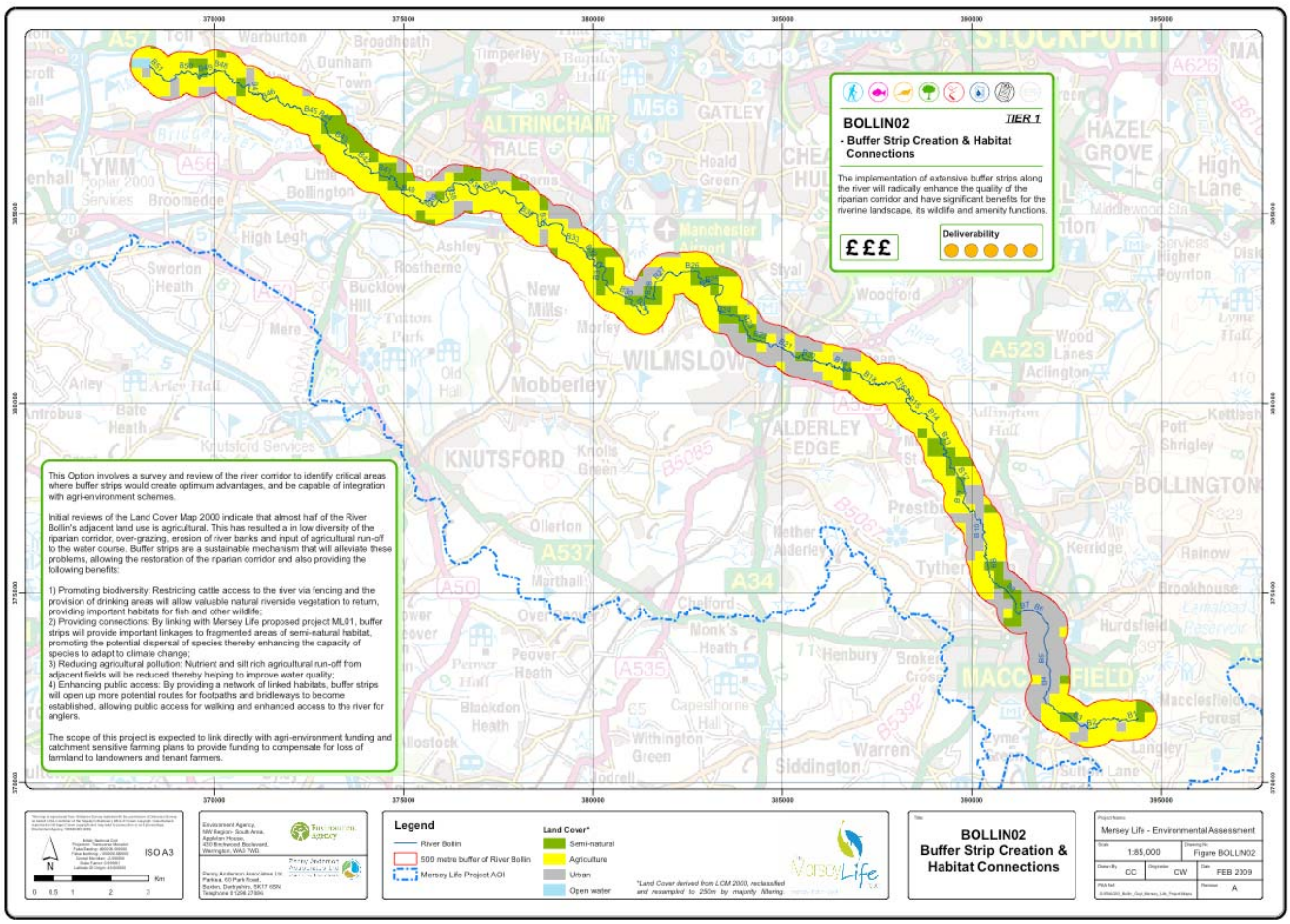
Where we need to take action

A description of the process used to prioritise need & opportunity.

Insert a map show priority locations

What we need to do

a portfolio of projects?



Action Plan Timetable

These are the things we need to do with suggested timescales

This needs scoping out – suggest a small sub-group help develop this. I think a timeline might be better. Most of this won't be included in the final document but we may want to show the journey we travelled.

When	What	Who	How
April	Carry prioritisation process for where we need to take action		
May	Complete needs/opportunity mapping		
May	Develop solutions (Task & Finish) groups		
May/June	Develop wider engagement plan & start engagement		
August	Solutions groups report to Steering Group		
September	Consultation with local communities/relevant organisations on possible actions/solutions		
Sept/Oct	Funding bids for CRF		
November	Launch of plan		
Feb 2013	Begin Project 1		
March 2013	Begin project 2		
April 2013	Delivery of project 1		

Appendix 1

Irwell Pilot Outcomes