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A. GOOD PRACTICE SUMMARY

Problem: Rivers and canals have had a profound effect on the character of EU cities and are dominant factors affecting their unique sense of place - they are often the defining features of urban areas. However, many cities have ‘turned their back’ on waterways following years of use and abuse (pollution, modification, neglect), breaking the intimate connection between cities, citizens and watercourses. Climate change and increased flood risks mean that rivers may also be a threat. This challenge is becoming more urgent due to the age of the infrastructure in post-industrial urban areas, which feature many buildings that now require rehabilitation. Cities thus have a ‘once in a lifetime’ opportunity to regenerate urban waterways, demanding a well laid-out integrated approach. However, the problem is that management and planning of urban waterways is highly fragmented (13: Wild et al, 2008), with many different landowners and stakeholders having responsibilities and rights. This case represents an important example of the problems of multi-level governance. The Sheffield Waterways Strategy demonstrates good practice in **the integration of bottom-up local community participation with top-down strategic priorities**, e.g. biodiversity and climate adaptation. It provides a **solution** to bring people together, to deliver integration geographically, across sectors and horizontally in terms of hierarchies and policy levels.

Timeframe, key dates and milestones: The Sheffield Waterways Strategy Group was established in **2003**. A consultant was brought in to draft a strategy, in consultation with high-level stakeholders and statutory bodies. This document, drafted in **2006** was finalised in **2008**. However, the contract proved problematic, due to the complexity of the issue, long-term ill health issues, and an overly top-down model (13: Holt et al, 2012). A knowledge-transfer grant was secured to explore new approaches, building on research to develop a more deliberative approach, based on collaborative planning principles. In **2007**, a major flooding episode occurred, (>1 in 100 year return period). From **2008-11**, participative workshops and meetings were held with a broad range of people; advanced 3d visualisation technology was used alongside group facilitation techniques (1;2). In **2013**, the local authority approved the Strategy (3;4), which was launched in **2014** (5).

The **Strategy Vision** is that: *“By 2022 our rivers will once again become central in making Sheffield, providing places where people choose to live, work and invest. Our watercourses and river corridors will be the defining features of a modern competitive, sustainable and attractive city, rich in wildlife and offering a wonderful quality of life to residents, workers and visitors.”* The Strategy includes 8 **Goals** relating to people, economic opportunity, climate change, promotion, heritage, access, stewardship and wildlife.

Main outputs and innovative elements: In 2008, the Group established the River Stewardship Company, a social enterprise which conserves, protects and improves waterways. Between 2008-14, Group Partners delivered many multifunctional blue-green infrastructure assets in the city, with the support of EU funding. This included exemplar deculverting projects demonstrating the benefits of ‘daylighting’ buried and hidden rivers. In 2014, individuals and community groups around the city delivered ‘One Big River Week’ - a series of events and happenings to celebrate waterways and to promote more sustainable water use (6). That year, Sheffield achieved a global first: a Business Improvement District with the focus to improve flood

resilience (7). This £20m initiative raises private sector funds alongside public investment, to protect 500 businesses and thousands of jobs. In 2015 the Group's work was highlighted as a good practice case study, highlighting how to bring together top-down strategic priorities with bottom up local community engagement (8); this documented the strategy development process, giving 7 key lessons for other cities (see section 2). The Group has strengthened a range of funding bids for climate proofing, walking and cycling routes, river restoration and open space investments, e.g. partners recently secured £2m of Lottery funding. Several of the partnership projects started under the auspices of this bottom-up strategy won prestigious awards, e.g. Porter Brook 2016 Living Waterways Award (9). The Strategy is unconventional for a water/catchment plan, in that it emphasises not just climate and water quality issues, but focuses on the value to people, the heritage aspects, the civic pride issues and the sense of opportunity. In 2016, the pioneering nature of the Sheffield approach was recognised in the National Flood Resilience Review, and was put forward as an exemplar for other cities to follow (10; 11). It has also been reported as a case study of good practice in the catchment-based approach (12).

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B. MATERIALS

1. Photo 1 – community engagement (section 4; Good Practice Summary)



2. Photo 2 – use of visualisations (section 4; Good Practice Summary)



3. **Sheffield Waterways Strategy document** (section 4; Good Practice Summary)
<https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/home/planning-development/regeneration/sheffield-waterways-strategy>
4. **Sheffield City Council strategy approval and endorsement decision** (section 4; Good Practice Summary)
 - <http://democracy.sheffield.gov.uk/ieDecisionDetails.aspx?ID=949>
5. **Media coverage of Strategy agreement and publication** (section 4; Good Practice Summary)
 - <http://www.thestar.co.uk/business/plan-launched-to-bring-new-life-to-sheffield-s-historic-waterways-1-6641445>
6. **Website for community-led festival to celebrate and improve urban waterways** (section 4; Good Practice Summary)
 - <https://sites.google.com/site/sheffildonebigriver/home>
7. **Lower Don Valley Business Improvement District** (section 4; Good Practice Summary)
 - <http://ldvflooddefence.co.uk/>
8. **Interreg VALUE+ good practice case study** (sections 4; 5; 7; Good Practice Summary)
 - <http://www.value-and.com/strategy/policy-lessons-and-recommendations/>
9. **Porter Brook Pocket Park Living Waterways Award** (section 4; Good Practice Summary)
 - <http://www.sheffieldnewsroom.co.uk/porterpocketpark/>
10. **National Flood Resilience Review** (sections 4; 7; Good Practice Summary)
 - https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/551137/national-flood-resilience-review.pdf
11. **Press release for National Flood Resilience Review visit to Sheffield** (section 4; Good Practice Summary)
 - <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/building-flood-resilience-minister-visits-innovative-projects-in-sheffield>
12. **Case study of good practice in the catchment-based approach** (sections 4; 7; 9; Good Practice Summary)
 - <https://www.catchmentbasedapproach.org/resources/tools-and-casestudies/deliver/the-sheffield-waterways-strategy>
13. **References and evidence of independent evaluation, assessment and documentation** (sections 2; 4; 7; Good Practice Summary)
 - Wild, T.C. et al (2008). Deculverting: reviewing the evidence on the 'daylighting' and restoration of culverted rivers. *Water and Environment Journal* 25 (3), 412-421.
 - Morgan, E. et al (2009). Rapid prototyping of urban river corridors using 3D interactive, real-time graphics", in Buhmann et al (Eds.) (2010). *Digital Landscape Architecture*. Wichmann, Heidelberg. 182–190.
 - Hurley, L. et al (2010). "Measuring" sustainable living agendas. *Management of Environmental Quality: An International Journal*, 21(1), 45-57.
 - Holt, A. et al (2012). The network governance of urban river corridors. *Ecology and Society* 17(4):25.

- Gill, L. et al (2013). An analysis of usage of different types of visualisation media within a collaborative planning workshop environment. Environment and Planning B: Planning and Design, 40(4), 742-754.
- Ciuraldi, M. et al (Eds.) (2015). VALUE+ Final Report. SYFP, Sheffield. <http://www.value-and.com/strategy> , 98-115.

14. Press cuttings – media coverage in the last year (section 12)

- <http://www.thestar.co.uk/news/grant-will-help-sheffield-river-see-daylight-for-first-time-in-a-century-1-8458334>
- <http://www.thestar.co.uk/news/feature-bold-plans-to-uncover-sheffield-s-hidden-rivers-1-8421598>
- <http://www.thestar.co.uk/news/putting-the-sheaf-back-into-sheffield-with-plan-for-new-1-35m-urban-park-1-7837544>
- <http://www.sheffieldtelegraph.co.uk/news/environment/feature-bold-plans-to-uncover-sheffield-s-hidden-rivers-1-8421598>