

CANFORD AREA STOUR VALLEY PARK WORKSHOP TRANSCRIPT

This workshop took place on the 11th of September 2021, with a focus on the Canford SANG (suitable alternative natural greenspace) area and bordering land. The intent for this workshop was to specifically look at the SANG and what opportunities are local to this place, and to consider how these opportunities relate to the wider aims of the Stour Valley Park project.

Thanks go to Canford Park SANG for kindly hosting us and granting use of their facilities.

Why are you here? What do you want to do?

What has brought you here today, and what do you want to achieve by attending today's workshop?

I want my grandchildren to experience the joy of natural history as do I.

I'd hope that the Stour Valley Park will provide opportunities to rewind, restore and manage the area effectively for all.

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Here because I have become distrustful of SANG process.

To come away believing we will be listened to and you're not just covering for something already planned.

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Motivation:

- 1) Walking and cycling connectivity along Stour Valley Way on both sides of river. Hengistbury to Kingston Lacy.
- 2) Wild and natural space to breathe.
- 3) Making it easy to access without the car from town centres.

Achieve:

Understanding of views, some consensus

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Heavy user of SANGs and open spaces.

Want to emphasise need for connected paths/routes through the area.

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Ward councillor for Bearwood and Merley, regular user of Canford Park SANG. Want to ensure Canford SANG is integrated with wider plans to expand how beneficial it is to local people.

Want to:

- Understand more about 'Stour Valley Park' project
- Ensure the plans are integrated and work for all interests - cyclists, pedestrians, dog walkers, horse riders, people with accessibility needs, river users
- Ensure the details are considered and work well

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Unlimited pedestrian and cycling access both sides of the Stour from Mudeford to Spetisbury and beyond.

Preserve as much natural land as meadow and woodland as possible.

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Share info.

To inform so area is available to all to include disabled/elderly.
Give wildlife a chance to live alongside humans.

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To support the creation of a potentially incredible place -
landscape.

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Practical proposals. Manage area to allow access to 'green area'
both sides of Stour.

Achieve consensus to stop/prevent any development on the area.

Preserve but manage big landscape.

Helping rescue woodland.

Allow access.

Walk and cycle both sides of Stour.

Access to recreation on the river - kayak, canoe etc.

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Want to make sure best use of big space for all parties.

Ensure all interested parties have a say and are taken into
account.

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1) Accessibility!

2) Accessibility

Path make up to allow the site to be accessible.

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- 1) Means to balance climate change
- 2) Reversing effects of pollution in rivers and air
- 3) Better (more sustainable) affordable house building
- 4) Better regulation for sewage dumping on rivers - accountability

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Horse riders are the most vulnerable road users so, with cyclists and walkers, need offload links e.g. railways and bridleways - no risk of accidents and breathing traffic polluted air (have won approx 50 Bfs and restricted byways, many after public inquiries since 1989)

e.g. Castleman Trailway 1982, was to run Poole to Ringwood and New Forest for walkers, cyclists and horse riders but Poole always refused horse use, although it brought 161 members of Wimborne and District Riding Club and Poole Pony Club (96 children) to our club and 2 fields of Higher Merley Farm - many kept along Magna Road (walkers only Merely Hill to Canford Bottom)

Cyclists and horses need North Stour path, part via new SANG.

Longfleet drive FP since 1992, BR claimed 1993 accepted by PBC 1998 - still only 1m wide between trees, overgrown with brambles and often deep mud? BRI25

Throop - Hurn horse crossing of Stour ordered by department of Transport in 1972, still never done!

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Desired outcome of this meeting:

- 1) Policy on use of the river for watercraft i.e. kayaks on river (non-motorised)
- 2) Policy on leisure cycleway provision linking from the park to adjacent cycleways

3) Join up Castleman Trailway with an off road route

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Interested in wildlife and the environment.
Want it to be accessible to all.
We should include the views of the young in this as well.
Make clear which parts of the river bank are accessible.

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Here to:
Hear local opinions
Protect local area

Aim to:
Preserve our greenspace for posterity
Walk freely
Accessibility

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Understand and influence the design and implementation of the new park and underlying concepts.
Observe and understand local opinion.

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Strategy document remind us of what it is.

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1) Overview of the view of local people and their needs.

2) Meet new local contacts.

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Here to preserve greenspace - recreation - biodiversity - climate change.

Aim to get Natural England to be more proactive.

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- 1) Listen
- 2) Observe
- 3) Explain
- 4) To achieve SVP vision

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Want to see and hear what the plan is and to emphasise that green-belt land should be kept as greenbelt land and to preserve and extend the footpaths to connect the separate areas avoiding busy roads.

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Information
Influence development of project
Hear what others have to say

How all users can have their needs met
To be listened to
How younger people can be involved

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I have a keen interest in climate change and the diminishing biodiversity. I am passionate about being part of something that can make a difference. I believe there should be more enforcement of rules, regulations and legislation to protect the environment. The river Stour is heavily polluted. We can expect extreme weather more frequently - flooding.

I want to go away knowing and understanding more about how the Stour Valley Park and SANG can make a difference.

Mapping

Thinking about everything that makes up this place – everything that exists and happens here.

- Trees
- Thicket
- Birdsong
- Quiet
- Otters
- Schools – Canford and others
- Birds of prey
- Butterflies
- Seasonal flooding
- Mobility scooter
- Circular route
- Lingering
- Car park
- Running
- Warden
- Connecting natural space
- Mental health
- Swans
- Relaxing
- Wheelchairs
- People
- Beavers

- Wildflowers
- Swans
- Kingfisher
- Wind in the willows
- Ripples
- Water meadows
- Cuckoo flowers/milk maids in profusion
- Trees
- Dog bins
- Natural growth/regeneration
- Conversation
- Water treatment plants/effluent
- Places to sit
- Woodland
- Bridges and stepping stones
- Rangers
- Management
- Maintenance
- Gaps in access without a car
- Listening to nature
- Fishing
- School cross country running
- Cycling
- Prescribed health walks
- Meeting friends
- Painting
- Natural flood management
- Bird watching
- Dog walking
- Grazing for ponies
- Coffee and ice cream shop
- Playing frisbee
- Wildlife watching
- Getting away from traffic on a bike
- Entertaining kids
- Peaceful contemplation
- Picnicking
- Swimming
- Extracting gravel

- No kayaks
- Farming
- Kids space
- Paddling
- Photography
- Paddling about
- Observing the changing seasons
- Horseriding
- Plane spotting
- Paddleboard
- Wildlife photography
- Dog show/event
- Water abstraction
- Blackberrying
- Botany
- Exercise

Review

Considering our overall aims for the Stour Valley Park, how should we assess previous actions and what lessons should we learn for the future?

What should we do more of?

- Integrated public transport
- Effective communications leading engagement
- Wildspace
- Toilet facilities at hubs
- Involve younger generation
- Link up bridleways and trailways
- Install natural play things for children
- Link up all non-motorised vehicles, walkers, cyclists and rider's routes along both sides of River Stour away from main roads
- Publicise amenities
- Acquire land or permissive access
- Careful management
- Visitor management
- Balancing all areas

- Sustainably funded
- Transport links – safe and easy
- Bridges
- Better promotion to widen range of people visiting
- More wild space (thickets)
- Interconnectivity between sites to allow longer walks
- More bat boxes and bird boxes and more trashy areas
- More Bankside tree planting to absorb rainfall run off up to 50m from riverbank
- Better access for all – better paths e.g. bicycles, pedestrians, dog walkers, horse riders
- Maintenance of the area e.g. cutting back of overgrown vegetation
- Public transport to SANG
- Gate in gate out – not necessarily a circular route
- More wild thickets
- More wildflower meadows

What should we do less of?

- Less manicured
- No weedkiller
- No house development on green floodplain
- Less water extraction?
- Less manicured
- Less rubbish/pollution
- Less very busy areas e.g. Kingfisher Barn
- Less car journeys to Stour Valley
- Less vandalism/antisocial behaviour
- Less hoop/kissing gates
- Less noise from roads
- Screening
- Less unnatural river structures
- Less house development
- Less nitrates on land
- Less light pollution
- Parking on roads – in front of private houses
- Less routes on roads
- Less single use routes – multifunction
- Take rubbish home

What should we learn for the future?

- Making a series of linked parks to provide an attraction all year round. Amenities for people and for nature, with good connectivity
- Need a way to bring in and encourage suitable private sustainable investment
- Need to connect/integrate not design sites in isolation
- Link constituent parts fully
- Create sustainable funding sources
- Provide enduring wild space for future generations
- Need positive management of public access – pressure on the natural environment
- All taking civic responsibility
- Investment
- Maintenance
- No building on green belt
- Ownership of project
- Needs to be driven by someone
- Create responsible accountable management group
- Active stakeholder consultation is essential
- Prioritise natural assets/landscape above making money

Planning

Picking a goal, what steps need to take place in order to achieve that goal?

Plan #1

Goal: Transport links to Stour Valley

1. Strategic view of car parks
2. Visitor access pattern
3. Appropriately surfaced routes and gates
4. Priority for walkers/cyclists over cars etc.
5. Clear signage
6. Access links app

Step 1

Project management team
Assessment and review of existing parking facilities
Researching issues for local people
Activities in different area connected to transport links

Step 2

Information consultation
Consult communities
Discuss need for electric vehicle facilities
Learning from experiences of other similar projects

Step 3

Beryl Bike/scooter bays along Stour Valley
Work with bus companies to link with routes and bus stops
Finance for car parks and accessible pathway and their upkeep
Clear visible signage
Many small car parks – finance car park
Finance access

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Plan #2

Goal: Consider connectivity – integrating along SANG and to Stour Valley

Step 1

Mapping barriers/gaps

Step 2

Map the opportunities

Step 3

- A) Separate walking/cycling access points from cars
- B) Charging points for mobility scooters/electric bikes
- C) Bridges across the river
- D) Link Castleman Trailway around Wimborne
- E) Route through by Canford School

Step 4

Integrate with transform travel for a united connection policies. Share funding

Step 5

Do it in bits if needed

Step 6

Connected and integrated route with wider Stour Valley Park

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Plan #3

Goal: To set up a Management Organisation

1. Discuss: Share and pool ideas, much as the workshops are doing
2. Develop: Formulate these into a publishable plan
3. Resource: Enter discussions with local or national government to fund the setting up of a managing trust or NGO
4. Deliver: Create the SVP management group

Step 1

Define structure of management organisation

Allocate resources

Define timescales/timeline

Define area of responsibility e.g. SANGS / Stour Valley

Define accountabilities

Step 2

Funding
Crowdfunding

Step 3

Determine who will be in charge – governance

Step 4

Create management that will last 40-100 years

Step 5

Create ownership of project – by government funded management
Incorporate local people

Step 6

Plead your case with a (supposedly) environmentally aware government –
SANGs are vital for protecting fragile ecosystems

Step 7

Open discussion with department of environment – DEFRA or local govern-
ment minister