



Working together to conserve and enjoy the River Trent corridor

What is OnTrent?

This is a long-term initiative intended to benefit local people and the natural and cultural heritage in the parishes along the River Trent. It draws together a wide range of organisations from the public, private and voluntary sectors, all of which have strong interests in the river's future. The initiative seeks to reverse the continuing decline in biodiversity by securing a better balance between wildlife and agriculture, commercial activity and development. The prime focus is on creating and managing wetlands where appropriate opportunities arise, and on conserving and enhancing the landscape of the river and its environs.

Background

The Trent valley is recognised as a strategically important feature in terms of its wildlife, landscape, archaeology and recreational potential. Nationally there has been recognition that over the last century the Midlands has suffered perhaps the worst decline in biodiversity of any English Region. The habitats, landscape features and archaeological resources of the River Trent and the floodplain parishes that bound it have suffered severe losses due to flood control, drainage, agricultural improvement, mineral extraction, built development and canalisation for navigational purposes. In both the West and East Midlands, along the length of the Trent, these features and are now fragmented and in some cases are at risk from further degradation or destruction.

Aim and objectives

The aim of the OnTrent initiative is to create a landscape fit for the 21st century, for both the river and its environs, from Stoke on Trent to the Humber estuary. The objectives are to respect and enhance local distinctiveness and create a rich diversity of linked wetland habitats whilst providing opportunities to improve the quality of life for local people, support the local economy and conserve the river valley's historic and cultural identity. Some of the key principles set out in the Government's sustainable development strategy *A Better Quality of Life* will underwrite these objectives: putting people first, taking a long-term perspective and respecting the environment.

Context for the OnTrent initiative

The organisations involved in the OnTrent partnership will use existing mechanisms where possible and develop and new ones where necessary in order to deliver the initiative. Some of the key mechanisms currently available are as follows:

The *UK Biodiversity Action Plan and local BAPs* set priorities and targets for restoring biodiversity in wetland habitats. OnTrent can help coordinate action plans along the Trent and thereby make a significant contribution to achieving biodiversity targets at the national and regional level.

The *MAFF England Rural Development Programme* provides a range of measures, including the *Countryside Stewardship*, *Woodland Grant*, *Rural Enterprise* and *Vocational Training* schemes. These are designed to conserve and improve the environment and to enable farming, forestry, other rural businesses and communities to adapt to changing circumstances and develop sustainable practices.

Targeting of these resources is underpinned by the *Countryside Character* approach, supported by the *Countryside Agency* and *English Nature*. Character descriptions identify the particular qualities of the landscapes of the River Trent and its parishes. *Local Landscape Assessment* work undertaken by local authorities further develops this process, aiming to inform future landscape change whilst retaining local distinctiveness.

The *Local Environment Agency Plans* for the Upper and Lower Trent identify as key objectives the enhancement of biodiversity, improvement of the Trent River fishery, improvement of water quality in tributaries, management of water resources, improvement of recreational facilities and flood-defence issues related to climate change. The creation of wetlands on the floodplain will feature in the consideration and implementation of these objectives.

The *Historic Landscape Character* mapping programme supported by *English Heritage* informs the identification of key features, the targeting of resources in relation to these features and the application of policy for landscape change. Research into the history and development of the River Trent is leading to a better understanding of the river's behaviour, flood events and the effects of climate change.

Regional economic, environment and spatial strategies for each of the regions through which the River Trent flows are being prepared by the *Government Offices* and *Development Agencies* for those regions. *Regional cultural strategies* are being prepared by consortia of cultural agencies. Many of these strategies are likely to identify the Trent as a strategic river corridor where relevant agencies should work together in order to conserve and enhance the natural and cultural heritage and optimise access to the river for education and recreation.

Development plans prepared by the various local planning authorities along the Trent set out policies designed to minimise environmental impacts from development and guide environmental enhancement. These include county structure plans and minerals local plans, unitary development plans and district plans. Each of the local authorities now has a duty to prepare a *Community Strategy* in support of the *UK Strategy for Sustainable Development*. Many local authorities are working with public, private and voluntary sector partners to promote *Local Agenda 21 strategies* for sustainable development within their areas. Consortia of local authorities are

leading the preparation of *local cultural strategies* that will refer to the natural and man-made features which help to shape the cultural identity of their areas and help to ensure services are provided in an integrated manner.

How the initiative will be delivered

The organisations involved in OnTrent will work together and co-ordinate their activity in order to capture resources, share information, influence policy, engage local communities and promote practical projects in pursuit of the initiative's objectives. Participation in any aspect of the initiative by any of the partner agencies or by others will be on a purely voluntary basis. The success of the initiative will be monitored and reviewed.

OnTrent will encourage:

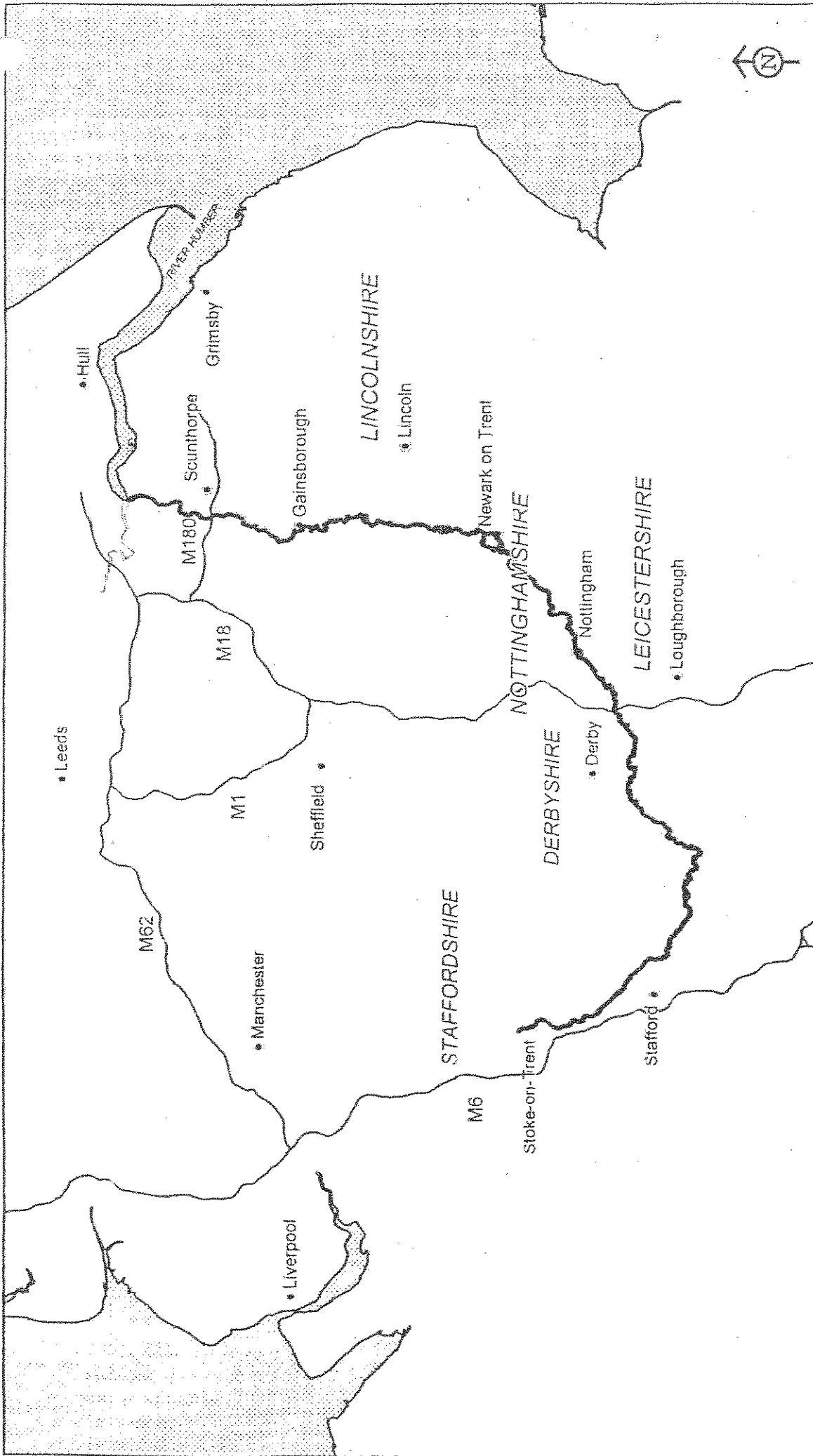
- Understanding of the significance of the valley landscape, the importance of the working countryside, the implications of development and the value of wetlands.
- Action to conserve, enhance and create wetlands to benefit people, wildlife, landscape and historic interests.
- Changes in policies, funding mechanisms and planning procedures to enable landowners and managers to assimilate wetlands into their enterprises.
- Consideration of other matters which support or impact on the aims of OnTrent including research of past and current land management practices in order to establish the degree to which the valley landscape is at risk.

The OnTrent partnership

The following organisations are members of the Steering Group which guides the work of the OnTrent initiative:

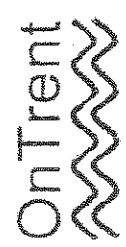
Country Land & Business Association	Nottinghamshire County Council
Countryside Agency	Quarry Products Association
Derbyshire County Council	Royal Society for the Protection of Birds
English Heritage	Severn Trent Water
English Nature	Sport England
Environment Agency	Staffordshire County Council
Forestry Commission	The Wildlife Trusts
Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries & Food	TXU Europe
National Farmers' Union	

The Steering Group represents a wider range of organisations with interests in the initiative. Representatives of these organisations first came together in 1999 to establish a Forum, which meets periodically to review progress and direction.



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 MAP WITH THE SANCTION OF THE
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The River Trent Corridor:



OnTrent

Local areas included within the OnTrent initiative:

- **Parishes**
- **Urban areas without Parish Councils**

Areas are listed here in approximate geographical sequence

DERBYSHIRE

Parishes

Catton

Walton on Trent

Drakelow

Newton Solney

Egginton

Willington

Repton

Stenson

Twyford

Foremark

Barrow on Trent

Ingleby

Swarkestone

Stanton by Bridge

Melbourne

Weston on Trent

Aston on Trent

Shardlow

Breaston

Urban areas without Parish Councils

Swadlincote

Long Eaton