

AGENDA 7, Enc ii) PRESENTATION FROM GROUNDWORK NORTH EAST AND CUMBRIA — WANSBECK RESTORATION WORK AND THE WANSBECK WAY

1. Purpose

To receive a presentation from Lesley Silvera, Groundwork North East and Cumbria on their work along the River Wansbeck (2020–26), including habitat restoration, riverside access improvements and the proposed Wansbeck Way route, and to agree a Member to represent the Council on this work going forward.

2. Background

Groundwork North East and Cumbria has been delivering a programme of environmental and access work along the Wansbeck since 2020, including barrage and pontoon works, the Wansbeck Restoration for Climate Change project (habitat interventions and monitoring), and catchment-scale mapping of opportunities for woodland, peat and meadow restoration.

The Council's attention is drawn in particular to the proposed **Wansbeck Way**, a new riverside route (Meldon to Sweethope Loughs, and Cambois to Mitford, passing through Ashington) intended to combine access improvements, biodiversity enhancement and water quality work along the river corridor. Delivery is subject to future funding. Groundwork has also invited community involvement in related activities such as riverfly surveys, flower and insect counts, litter picks and path condition surveys.

3. Recommendation

Council is asked to:

- Welcome the presentation from Lesley Silvera, Groundwork North East and Cumbria;
- Note the scope of the Wansbeck Way proposal and the wider nature restoration work along the Wansbeck corridor; and
- Appoint a Member to act as the Council's representative in relation to the Wansbeck Way project, to liaise with Groundwork and report back to Council as the project develops.