

Appendix D – Feasibility Costs for Upper Parrett Waterway Plan and Langport River access and navigation project.



**CAPITAL SCHEMES
REQUEST FOR FEASIBILITY FEES**

Name Of Scheme: - Upper Parrett Waterway Plan – Promoting access to and use of the River Parrett (Langport)

Feasibility Amount Requested: - £5000 (Matchfunding contribution – total estimated £20,000)

Section 1

| Project Outline |
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| <p>This request for feasibility costs is to assist in the further development of a project to promote, develop and manage the re-establishment of a legal right for recreational navigation on the River Parrett and its tributaries upstream of Oath Sluice, minimising any public safety issues, and negative environmental impact of the river corridor, through a dedicated navigation authority. This work will be programmed within the emerging Upper Parrett Waterway Plan, which will be further developed as part of this feasibility work.</p> <p>The costs required are to make further progress on recent work through the Langport River Group and Somerset Waterways Development Trust, which completed background research, conducted broad stakeholder consultation, and reviewed and endorsed a short-term action plan. This work will develop the conclusion and recommendations made from the recent report compiled for SSDC and the Somerset Waterways Development Trust. (For a full copy of the report and recommendations see www.southsomerset.gov.uk/river)</p> <p>The costs will provide sufficient consultancy over the coming months to provide a high standard of project governance, and associated costs to maintain momentum through the completion of some essential tasks within the project action plan. The required activities include: consideration of the establishment of a shadow Navigation Authority, for the Upper Parrett; the early stages of work towards the preparation of an Upper Parrett Waterway Plan; monitoring the progress of the current Environment Agency Transport and Works Act Order; support to the governance of partnership and programme arrangements eg: the Langport River Group and links to a potential Upper Parrett Navigation Authority, and the Somerset Waterways Advisory Committee;; consultation with key statutory and non—statutory bodies (Environment Agency, Natural England among others..)</p> <p>Concluding the feasibility work will support (or not) further bids to a variety of funders for a programme of installations to promote boating and canoeing, plus the development and start up costs for a navigation authority and a range of water-based activity.</p> <p>There is no explicit expectation that the outcomes of the feasibility work will result</p> |

in a further capital investment by SSDC.

The feasibility costs will include some initial design and communications material, and regular progress reports will be provided to SSDC via the Langport River Group and project team.

Section 2

Service Objectives & Outcomes

The River Parrett flows from its source at Cheddington on the Dorset border, across the Somerset moors and levels to the Bristol Channel at Burnham on Sea. The Parrett and its tributaries have a long associations with transport and trade, from the Neolithic period, Celtic coracles and Saxon wherries have travelled its waters as have the Roman ships who used the River Parrett and Yeo to build and provision their strategic garrison at Ilchester (Lendinae). There are sites of water mills throughout the river corridor, notably the Parrett Works at Martock, although today the river is hardly navigable at this point.

From 1200 AD goods from the historic port of Bridgwater passed inland for local distribution and returning downstream laden with local produce of the area. The Romans and the Saxons certainly used the river systems although detailed information is very limited. The river was the motorway of today, and commercial trade continued to around 60 years ago, following which some navigational structure were removed, some remain and some were converted into drainage structures.

The Langport Vision and Action Plan (2002), and subsequent local consultation identified improving access to and usage of the River Parrett in the Langport area, as a high priority for long-term investment. Strong links are made between local economic and environment benefits, together with the opportunities for activity and participation on and near to the river network. Whilst various studies have been completed, and much analysis of the issues has taken place, the progress of recent years has not kept pace with local expectations.

The aspiration to re-establish navigation on the Upper Parrett is not alone in Somerset – with interests in the Bridgwater and Taunton Canal, Tone and Huntspill, all featuring in current regeneration programmes. The Somerset Waterways Advisory Group (a joint committee established by Somerset County Council) provides access to a broad partnership of interests, including the Inland Waterways Association, the districts and county council, Somerset Waterways Development Trust, British Waterways and Environment Agency.

The potential scheme will aim to promote local economic vitality for Langport and the surrounding area, promote activity and increased access to the river and surrounding countryside. This project also strongly complements other existing and planned provision including the River Parrett Visitor Centre, the Great Bow Wharf, the River Parrett Trail and network of rights of way, the proposed cycleway to Martock.

Section 3

| Estimated Costs | £/hours |
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| Capital Revenue Officer time (hours) Charlotte Jones Pauline Burr Katy Menday | £5000 £15000 50 hours 20 hours 10 hours |
| Funded by: SDDC Area North External sources (eg: Levels and Moors, SCC) | 5000 15000 |