

## Green Infrastructure Assessment Proforma: Parish of Saltford

### 1. GI Base maps

**a) Is the draft GI map generally accurate - are any key features missing or incorrect? Please annotate the map with any errors or omissions.**

Several ponds (including Saltford's well-known 3 medieval ponds) were omitted together with a small but long standing copse, Colonel's Wood. These have been marked on the map. Permissive bridleways were also omitted from the map – these are recorded on the Saltford Parish Working Map (compiled by B&NES 28.11.2007. Saltford Parish Council License No. 100014668).

**b) Did you find the GI map useful and are there any ways we could improve it?**

The map was useful but some of the colour schemes for marking key areas such as SSSIs were unclear.

### 2. GI Networks for people

**a) Are there any gaps/opportunities in your parish networks of footpaths and cycleways (i.e. your active access networks)?**

No recognised or obvious gaps at present [but see 1. a) re permissive bridleways missing from GI Base map.]

NOTE: In Q1 of 2014 the permissive footpaths and bridleways on the south side of Saltford were ploughed up to be brought back into arable use due to the cessation of Countryside Stewardship Scheme funding for providing public access. This represents a serious loss of a long held (over 20 years) community asset that Saltford wishes to see reinstated as soon as possible.

**b) Which areas and places do you actively use for outdoor play and relaxation both within and near to your parish?**

- River Avon - the river itself for fishing, sailing, canoeing, leisure craft and also the River Avon Trail for walkers and dog walkers.
- Bath-Bristol Railway Path (cycling and walking).
- Avon Cycle Way (Sustrans Regional Route 10).
- Sports ground behind Saltford Hall (mainly football and cricket).
- Public playing field by Saltford School including children's play area.
- Saltford's extensive network of public and permissive footpaths and permissive bridleways. Also footpaths that pass through local woods (Longwood & Folly Wood).
- Saltford Golf Club.
- Cotswold AONB is frequently used by local walkers (e.g. for walks to Kelston Round Hill).
- Saltford's rural countryside landscapes attract photographers and its Regionally Important Geological Sites (RIGS) attract geologists.
- Several local landowners are content with public access to much of their land in

addition to the existing footpaths - but see Note in section 2 (a).

- Horses and horse riding in several fields (using the permissive bridleways) and lanes both within Salford's Green Belt and in adjacent Green Belt.

### **3. GI networks for wildlife**

#### **a) What opportunities are there to improve the green areas and corridors for wildlife?**

- Local ponds (some of which are identified in 1a) are in need of wildlife sensitive management, in some cases clearance.
- The invasive plants Himalayan Balsam (relatively easy to eradicate) and Japanese Knotweed (no clump successfully removed) threaten local flora and the integrity of the River Avon's riverbank. The balsam and other invasive herbaceous species (notably, garden cultivars of Columbine) are problematic elsewhere, particularly along the Bath-Bristol Railway Path. Non-native maples and Horse-chestnut threaten the predominantly native woody species composition. Spanish Bluebell is severely problematic being close to some wild Bluebell stands. Garden primula varieties may pollute the few remaining Primroses and Cowslips. An audit of current invasive species issues, status and management possibilities would be helpful.
- The provision of advice and guidance to local farmers and the Highways Department on appropriate hedge and roadside verge cutting regimes would provide better protection/enhancement of native flora and fauna.
- An audit of ancient and long standing trees in the parish followed by the provision of advice and guidance on their suitable management/protection recognising their importance as wildlife habitat.
- Better enforcement of waste regulations to minimise incidents of fly-tipping.
- Encouragement of native species planting in private gardens and the specific public areas to support pollinating insects (including bees). The restoration of parts of the Bristol-Bath Railway Path embankment through the removal of saplings and scrub etc. is one example; Salford Environment Group is developing a voluntary project for undertaking a major piece of this work with effect from autumn 2013. Also SEG has taken steps to protect and encourage the cultivation of rare Bath Asparagus, a plant with a highly localised distribution in UK, from the only two known locations of its occurrence in Salford.
- The removal of non-native trees especially invasive species for example the Tree of Heaven on The Outlook at the Shallows and replacement with native trees would be beneficial for wildlife. Also where possible the adoption of grass mowing regimes conducive to allowing existing native wildflowers to flourish and re-seed themselves should be adopted as a general policy by B&NES. Roadside verges or grassed non-recreational areas of the village would be examples of where wildflower-friendly grass cutting regimes should be adopted.

#### 4. Multi-function and value

**a) Are there any other green assets you value both within and near to your parish and why?**

The Cotswold AONB is frequently used by local walkers (e.g. for walks to Kelston Round Hill). Avon Valley Adventure and Wildlife Park to the west of Saltford provides leisure facilities for young families. Saltford Sewage Treatment Works is a vital reservoir for shy wildlife and although not open to the public enriches public values by dispersing wildlife. The River Avon within, upstream and downstream of Saltford provides an important leisure facility (fishing, rowing, sailing, observing wildlife etc.).

**b) Are there any existing green spaces that could provide more benefits for the community e.g. to grow community food, support wildlife, provide shade through tree planting, reduce water runoff?**

There is a shortage of allotments in the village. Water runoff from the fields in Green Belt land on the south of the residential area can be excessive after periods of extreme rainfall and could be attenuated by either planting of appropriate trees and hedgerows and/or a change in crops grown and/or ploughing regimes prior to crop planting.

**c) Are there any special open spaces that you want considered for designation as a "local green space"? (NPPF paragraph 77)**

The public playing field by Saltford School including children's play area provides an important play area for children living on the south side of Saltford and would benefit from a "local green space" designation to protect it from development in the future.

Other green spaces that provide areas of green space include The Outlook (picnic area on a steep hill) above the Shallows and the strips/triangles of grass that occur within several housing areas (e.g. Stratton Road, Norman Road, The Broadway/Chelwood Road, Brockley Road, Haselbury Grove, and behind Drake Close and Anson Close).

The allotments in and around the village used by residents for growing vegetables are a leisure facility and a local source of healthy food.