

Water Environment Improvements Project Evidence Form

Scope & Purpose

This form is to be used by the Water Environment External Governance Group (WEGG), to review, validate and formally approve the length of Water Environment Improved for this project. The form has been completed by the Water Environment Team with support from project partners to be presented to the WEGG. Upon formal WEGG approval, the km water environment improved will be recorded against the ODI and projects marked as completed on the Water Environment Scorecard and Mapping Portals.

Project Name

Kielder Water and Forest Park Enhancement – Year 1

Project Leads

| Company/ Organisation | Named Lead | Position |
|--------------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------------|
| NWG | Andrew Rogers | Events Planning and Investments Coordinator |
| Kielder Water & Forest Park Development Trust (KWFPDT) | Hilary Norton | |
| Northumberland Wildlife Trust (NWT) | Katy Barke | Living Landscapes Project Manager |
| Red Squirrels Northern England | Heinz Traut | Project Manager |

Water Environment Improved

| Year | Claimed | Proposed | Reason For Any Change |
|--------|---------|----------|-----------------------|
| Year 1 | 12km | 12km | N/A |

Project Assurance

This project has been reviewed internally to ensure it has delivered benefits above and beyond our baseline and regulatory obligations to improve the water environment accessible to customers across at least two out of three aspects. Following our assurance process, the project was approved by both our internal and external groups for review before delivery. This form presents evidence of project completion and the outputs achieved, to request project sign off.

| Level | Project Acceptance Date | Project Approval Date | Completed Project Sign Off Date |
|-----------------------------------------------|-------------------------|-----------------------|---------------------------------|
| Project Team | October 2020 | October 2020 | N/A |
| Water Environment Steering Group (Internal) | October 2020 | October 2020 | N/A |
| Water Environment Governance Group (External) | October 2020 | October 2020 | January 2021 |

Water Environment Project Timescales

| Candidate Project Approved | Project Initiated | Project Completed |
|----------------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| October 2020 | December 2020 | March 2021 |

Project Summary and Highlights

Summary

This project has contributed to enhanced visitor and customer enjoyment and protection of native red squirrels and nesting ospreys at Kielder Water. Located within the Tyne catchment in Northumberland, Kielder Water provides extensive visitor and recreational facilities and is accessible to the public via the Lakeside Way; the footpath circumnavigating the reservoir. This project has enhanced 12km of the Lakeside way from Waterside to Tower Knowe.

Kielder water and associated land is largely managed by NWG, Kielder Water Forestry Park Development Trust and the Forestry Commission. It has a surface water area of over 2740 acres (11 km²) with Kielder water and Kielder forest together forming Kielder Water and Forest Park, one of Britain's leading tourist destinations.

Highlights

- Enhanced protection of nesting Osprey and viewing facilities for customers to safely learn and view the Ospreys without causing disturbance
- Provision of a wheelchair-accessible fixed telescope within the new relocated Osprey watch building which has a camera feed to the Osprey nest
- Year-round (Covid-19 permitting) nature activities for families and a suite of interpretation to help visitors to understand and value water and wetlands
- Protection of native red squirrels through a dedicated ranger to monitor the location of red squirrels and controlling invasive grey squirrels
- 33 new signs have been installed along the 12km of improved pathway providing enhanced customer and visitor experience

Kielder Water and Forest Park Enhancements



Total Length of Accessible Water Environment: 12km

Figure 1: Map of accessible water environment at Kielder



Figure 2: Installation of the new camera and Osprey nest protection at Kielder Water

Project Outputs, Benefits & Evidence Against Criteria

| Access, Facilities & Recreation | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Outputs | Benefits |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Procurement and installation of a new Osprey watch facility (cabin), with new cameras linked to nest 7 (Osprey nesting platform) • New facility is adjacent to Tower Knowe café – a much improved location • Installation of a new disabled access telescope to view the Osprey nest • Installation of 33 signs including multidirectional finger posts along the Lakeside way • Inclusion of 'what 3 words' on new signs • Footpath repair works | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ A1: Increased access to, engagement with and enjoyment of the water environment through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Free and accessible facility for all members of the public ○ Enhanced customer experience at the site including multi-user facilities and improved Osprey watch location ○ Enjoyment and appreciation of the natural environment through enhanced biodiversity and wildlife viewing opportunities ○ New signs and improved footpath result in enhanced visitor and customer experience ➤ A2: Benefits health and wellbeing through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Engagement with nature provided at the site ○ A focal point to socialise in nature, with facilities including refreshments and the opportunity to follow nesting progress ➤ A3: Influences positive environmental behaviours through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Environmental education and awareness, including the opportunity for NWG to engage with customers around water use and management |
| Expected Project Outcomes | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Additional facilities and learning opportunities is expected to bring an additional 6000 people to the site engaging with new interpretation and discovering more about wildlife ▪ Increased opportunities for disabled persons to enjoy nature ▪ Year-round nature experiences with Kielder being one of the most popular nature destinations | |
| Evidence | |
| <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-around;">   </div> <p>Ground works in place and cabin for the new Osprey watch facility procured</p> | |



Example of new signage installed along Lakeside Way and a representation of the all access telescope for Osprey watch



Resurfacing works along the Lakeside Way – two example locations where surface improvements have been carried out


Wildlife & Biodiversity

| Outputs | Benefits |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding for a dedicated ranger to help protect red squirrels and reduce invasive grey squirrels • Installation of bat roost features within the new Osprey watch cabin • Protection of the Osprey nest including barriers, signage and education | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ B2: Improves the conservation status and or abundance or distribution of species through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Protection of the red squirrel (via ranger) ○ Protection of nesting Ospreys ○ Inclusion of bat roosting features ➤ B3: Reduces the risk or impact of non-native species (INNS) through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reduction in non-native grey squirrels |

Expected Project Outcomes

- Range extension and species populations of red squirrel boosted
- Longevity, protection and success of nesting Ospreys
- Bats roosting within the new Osprey watch cabin

Evidence




Kielder and Harwood Reds

We recently received a cash boost of £15,000 from Northumbrian Water's Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) Branch Out fund to enable the project team to continue protecting red squirrels in two key areas that overlap in a popular beauty spot in Northumberland.

Around the Kielder Water and Forest Park area, knowledge of red squirrel populations is incomplete with the team knowing they are there, but the presence of greys squirrels in the area is giving some cause for concern. Earlier this year, support from Forestry England enabled RSNE's local contract ranger to monitor and control 50 grey squirrels at Kielder Village and Falstone, either side of Kielder Water. It is very likely that some greys have slipped through the 'net' and are present along the 26 miles of water's edge of the Lakeside Way. The INNS funding has arrived at the perfect time, as it will allow the team to protect local red squirrels on the Kielder shoreline, including the popular Waterside squirrel hide at Leaplish, where greys have been recently sighted, by deploying monitoring stations for six months. Such deployment will give a better understanding of the local situation and will allow the area's ranger to respond rapidly to any grey sightings.

Northumbrian Water's Conservation and Land Manager, Stuart Pudney, said: "It's fantastic we can support the RSNE project to help protect the woodland habitat for the survival of red squirrels".



Article from the most recent (winter 2020) Red Report newsletter by RSNE



Solar panels, radio mast, control box and receivers for Osprey Watch

| Additional & Secondary Benefits | |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Outputs | Benefits |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increased visitor and customers to site • Additional opportunities for customer engagement and learning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ D1: Provides resilience and adaptation to climate change and/or reduces the risk of flooding through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Through changes in customer awareness ➤ D2: Provides benefits to local communities, the local economy or NWG through: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Increased visitors will benefit the local economy and NWG |
| Expected Project Outcomes | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Increased profile for Kielder will support the role NWG aspires to play in influencing adaptation to, and mitigation of, climate change | |
| Evidence | |
| | |

Customer Testimonies & Media

Due to the current Covid pandemic there has to date, not been any media on Osprey watch. It is hoped the site will be opened shortly and announcements will be made.

Lead Partner Quotes & Testimonials

Hilary Norton, Kielder Water & Forest Park Development Trust (March 2021):

The Kielder Water & Forest Park Development Trust is delighted with the new Osprey Watch facility at Tower Knowe. Due to its convenient location within the Tower Knowe site, it will attract many more visitors and includes a new accessible telescope. The interpretation within the new cabin will provide information for visitors not just on Osprey but other wildlife at Kielder. The quality of the images from the new nest with the new camera is significantly improved and will give visitors a much better insight to the nesting Osprey. The nest protection measures include stealth cameras and road barriers which give partners confidence in the protection of our Osprey. The new cabin includes a bat roosting area with camera, so images can be shown on screens within the cabin. We are all thrilled that finally images that will be seen in the Osprey Watch cabin as well as potentially shared on social media platforms, are clearly at Kielder – where previously camera images were all within forest.

It is anticipated that the new Osprey Watch facility and experiences will lead to increased numbers of visitors and therefore donations, which will greatly aid future sustainability.

Katy Barke, Living Landscapes Projects Manager, Northumberland Wildlife Trust (March 2021):

The new osprey viewing point and wildlife cabin at Tower Knowe will provide a bespoke and reinvigorated experience to the thousands of visitors who visit Kielder to learn about and explore the special flora and fauna that can be found there. Our wonderful volunteers will have the resources they need to bring the stories of the Kielder ospreys to life and engage new audiences with this unique and special bird. The new camera will, for the first time, provide us with a clear and reliable image from this new nest that can be broadcast online to anywhere in the world, massively widening our reach. The nest protection measures will keep the birds safe for everyone to enjoy at a suitable distance. Thank you for your investment in Kielder Osprey Watch and we can't wait to show it off when we're able.