

## **Greenspace 13 - Success Railway**

### **1.0 Introduction**

1.1 Success Railway is a 1km linear disused railway that has been landscaped into a green walking route. There is a central surfaced path, which is in need of repair, with wide buffers of grassland, wet flushes, woodland plantations and hedges.

### **2.0 Location and Accessibility**

2.1 Success Railway is located just south of Success village, Shiney Row and Philadelphia, approximately 7.5km to the south-west of central Sunderland. The linear site extends west-east for approximately 1km between the A182 to the north-east and Blind Lane to the west and a public footpath links to two roads. Directly to the south of the site lies woodland plantation, with pasture to the north and scrub to the east and west.



2.2 The site is close to residential development, but areas of open countryside are present as a buffer around much of the site. These provide links through vegetated corridors to the wider landscape, albeit the corridors are partly hindered by road networks in the immediate and wider area.

### **3.0 Existing Management and Maintenance**

3.1 Success Railway is an important countryside site. It is a green wildlife corridor with a variety of habitat, acting as a wildlife stepping-stone between large areas of greenspace. The path through Success Railway is a Public Right of Way and is therefore maintained by SCC's Rights of Way Team (part of the Highways Team).

### **4.0 General description and observations**

4.1 Success Railway is a linear greenspace and is part of a local network of greenspaces used by residents for dog walking, running, cycling and general informal recreation. Running up the length of the railway line, there is a dolomite footpath which runs the length of the site. The path surface has become worn so that it is lower than the surrounding vegetation. Water is no longer draining off the surface but is collecting in large puddles. Encroaching surface vegetation has reduced the width of the path. This has resulted in the path becoming muddy, so walkers are avoiding the path and creating desire lines across the grassland. The quality of the grassland is deteriorating due to this use by walkers, cyclists and potentially motorbikes.

4.2 At various points through the site, there are ruts in the grassland from previous unauthorised vehicle use of Success Railway. This has reduced due to additional barriers. These ruts are collecting water and creating small ponds where wetland plants such as sedges and rushes are colonising. If water were managed, so that it drained from the newly surfaced path into these wet areas, they could be enlarged by creating a series of shallow scrapes and ponds.

4.3 There is a pond, which is drying out and so by reinstating drainage across the path, water draining into the pond could increase. Excess pond vegetation could be cleared to create an increased area of open water.

### **Access and Interpretation**

4.4 There is no signage or interpretation on Success Railway and no identity. Success Railway connects via a network of footpaths to the open space around Herrington Burn as well as to linear walkway/cycleways to Philadelphia and Houghton. Following the Herrington Burn northwards will connect to Herrington Country Park. Heading southwest across Blind Lane connects to Elba Park.

### **5.0 Proposed Works**

### 5.1 Habitat Restoration aims at Success Railway:

- Improve quality of grassland by managing access to reduce desire lines, improve drainage and change cutting regime.
- Improve structural diversity of woodland by thinning of non-native species, opening-up canopy and underplanting with ground flora and woodland plants.
- Increase diversity of habitats through creation of additional scrapes and wetland areas and reinstating existing pond.

### 5.2 Access and Interpretation

- To upgrade signage to give Success Railway greater identity and connect the greenspace with other routeways.
- To resurface the bridleway including channelling path surface drainage into wet scrapes for micro wetland habitat creation and obstruction of motor vehicle misuse, and to encourage people to remain on the path

### 6.0 Budget

Source of Funding	Amount (£)
S106	62,123
Area Committee	19,000
NLHF	-
NECF	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>81,123</b>

Habitat	Project	Season Completed	Budget (£)
Neutral Grassland	Carry out additional cut of meadow to address presence of rank grasses and removal of encroaching scrub	August – September	3,129
Ponds and Wetland	Reinstate existing pond	January – March	2,700
	Dig out three wetland scrapes at intervals along the length of Success, using existing ruts and depressions, as location and will be linked to improved path drainage.		-
Existing Woodland & Scrub	Carry out woodland thinning and scrub clearance	October – March	11,250
	Removal of ruderal vegetation and clearance of bramble.	April – September	2,599
	Under planting with plug plants	April – June	3,832
Access	Installation of signage and waymarks	Anytime	4,500
	Resurface 577 m of footpath to reinstate the path width (3.5 m) and camber with additional drainage onto adjacent grassland to support specification to be agreed.		45,000

Contingency – DWT			-
Contingency – SCC			8,112
<b>Total</b>			<b>81,123</b>

The specification for each area of work is outlined in the Specifications Links with Nature document and details of future maintenance and management are outlined in the Maintenance and Management Plan document.

