The Rivers Trust

Chris Coode

Deputy CEO & Senior Programmes Manager

Thames21

the umbrella body of the rivers trust movement

where there's water, there's life

RIVERS AND WELLBEING. DELIVERING URBAN RIVER IMPROVEMENTS

Chris Coode - Senior Programmes Manager

URBAN CATCHMENT

THAMES21

- 1994: The National Rivers Authority and Tidy Britain Group sets up Thamesclean galvanising community action

- 1998: Thames21 formed
  - strengthening partnership working
  - creating collective responsibility

- 2004: Charity Charitable Status, Thames21 Ltd

- 2018: 34 staff with a turn over of £1.5million

THAMES21

PRACTICAL ACTION

BENEFITS OF NATURAL SPACES

- The 25 Year Environment Plan says the Government want to see “the natural environment put at the heart of all local Health and Wellbeing Strategies”.
- Being in green space has huge benefits to both physical and mental health and also significant social benefits.
- Being in green space can improve mood and result in a decrease in blood pressure and muscle tension.
- Good quality green space can lead to higher physical activity levels and people living in close proximity to good quality green spaces enjoy better health and live longer.
- Improving access to and use of green space can help to reduce health inequalities.
- Green space is important for prevention and for reducing rates of some chronic diseases: e.g. trees improve air quality and asthma rates
- Exercising outdoors in natural and green spaces is more beneficial to health and wellbeing than indoor exercise.

CELEBRATE

Firs Farm Wetlands

Wetland area ~ 4,000m^2

Volunteer planting in September 2015 organised by Thames21

During construction (July 2015)

720m^2 of pre-planted coir mats installed in 2 days

Trees and shrubs planted in Autumn 2015

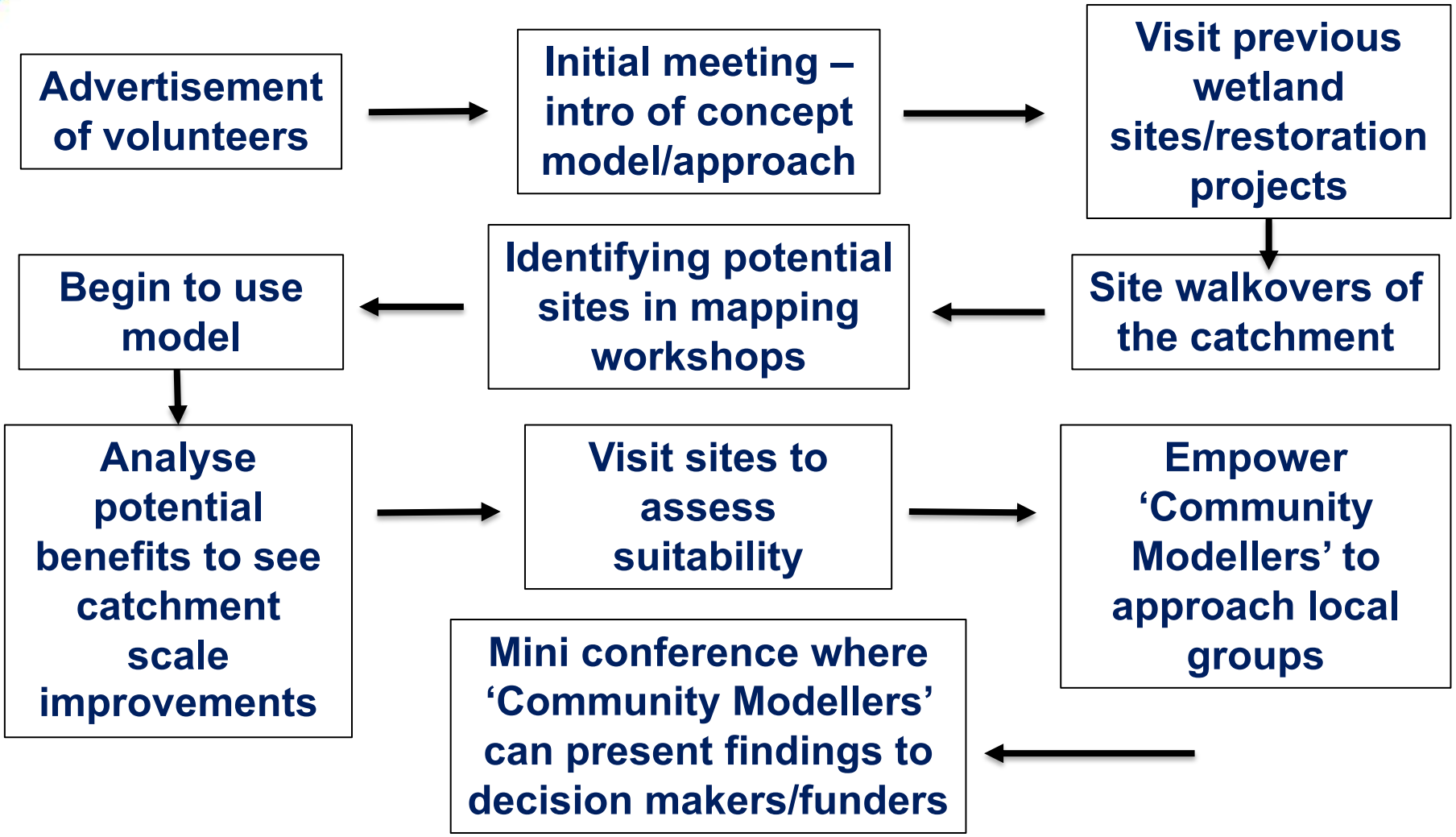
Following completion (June 2016)

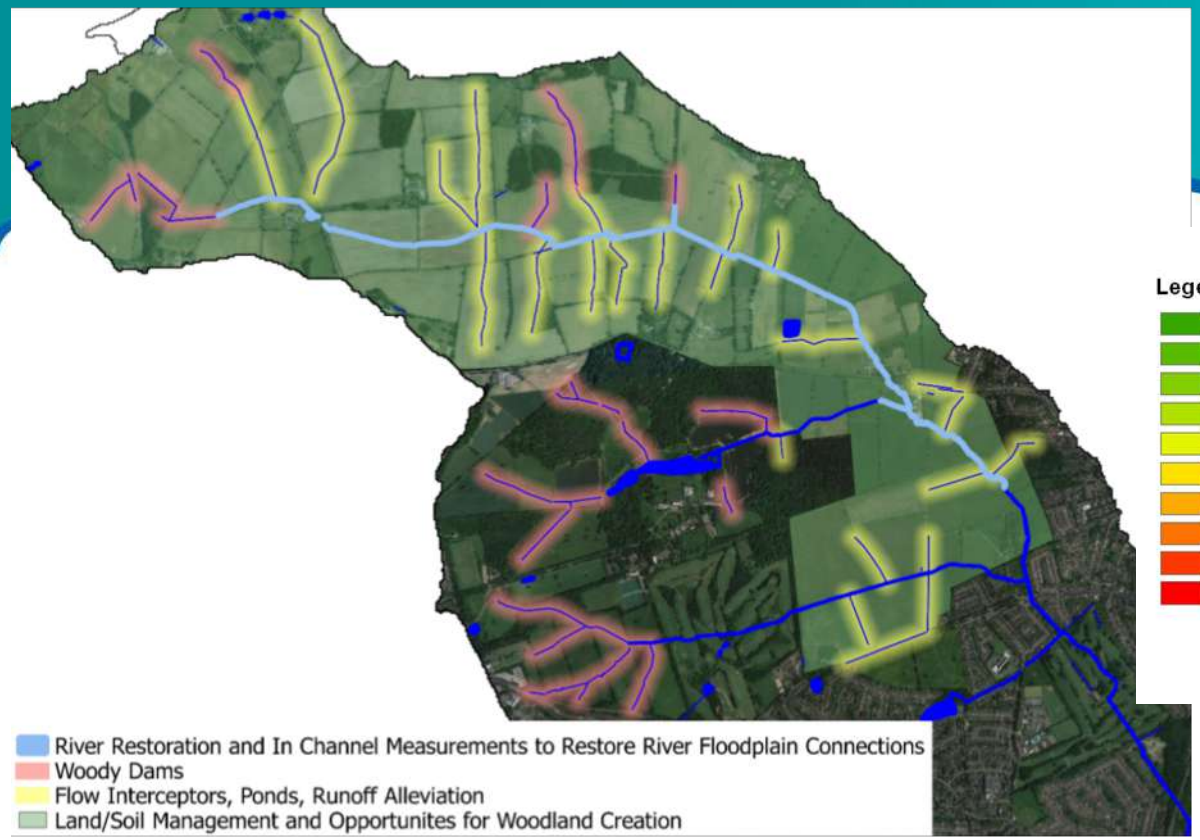
Firs Farm
Saturday 14th July
Festival 2018

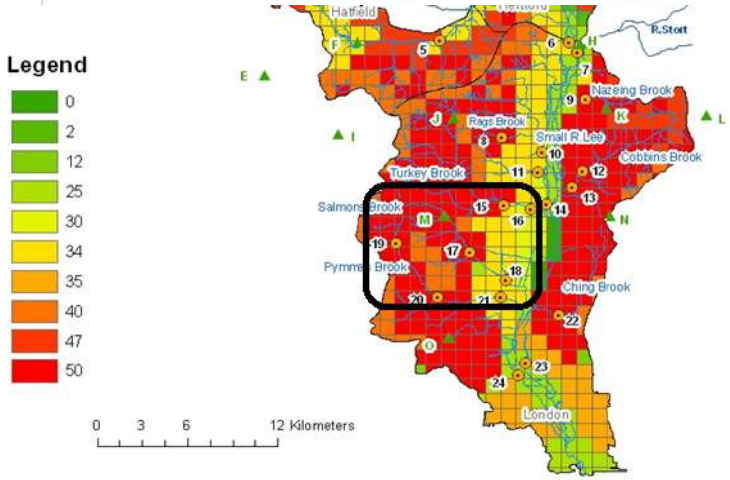
COMMUNITY MODELLING

‘A *way for local people to access the tools used by scientists and authorities to manage environmental problems’* Oxford University

COMMUNITY MODELLING ENGAGEMENT




River Restoration and In Channel Measurements to Restore River Floodplain Connections
Woody Dams
Flow Interceptors, Ponds, Runoff Alleviation
Land/Soil Management and Opportunites for Woodland Creation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Turkey Brook
Salmons Brook
Pymme Brook
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London

LONG TERM SUPPORT

In 2017, 22 Badged Groups delivered 124 events:

- Over 800 bags of rubbish collected
- On-land, wading and boat-based litter picking
- Other activities undertaken:
  - Vegetation management
  - Habitat creation
  - Himalayan Balsam removal
  - Gardening
  - Creation of wildflower meadows
  - Guided walks
  - Stalls at public events

URBAN WATERWAY ISSUES

Unnatural:

Rivers and streams in urban areas don't look like they should.

Rubbish and waste:

Many forms of litter end up in waterways.

Borders and boundaries:

Waterways are seen as boundaries around communities in London.

Awareness:

Many people don't know where their closest waterway is

Nasties:

Waterways contain pollutants from daily living

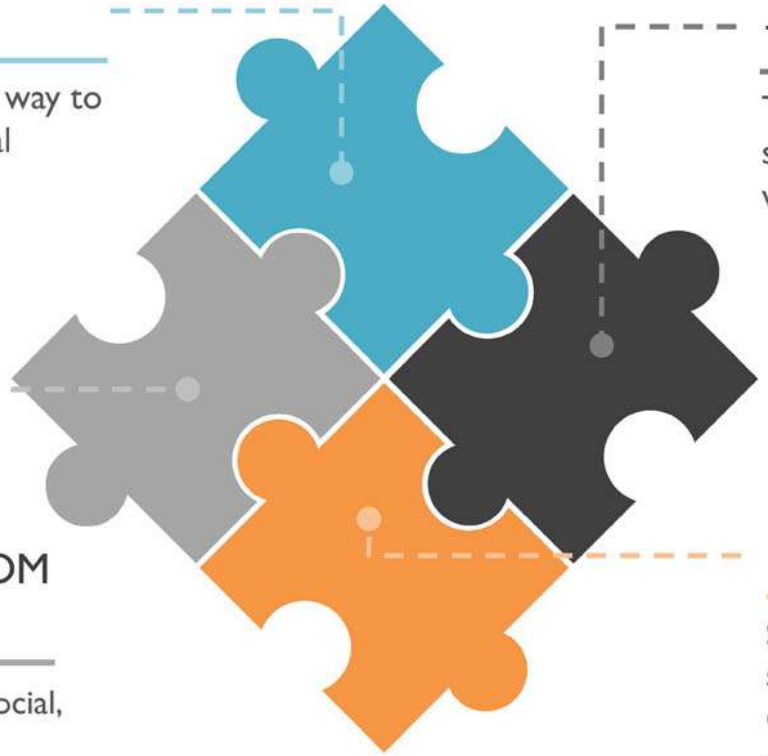
POLICY

STRATEGIC DATA, EVIDENCE + INFORMATION

Present robust evidence in a clear way to help build consensus, facilitate local decision-making & secure funding

LOCAL CHOICES, PRIORITIES + AMBITIONS

Talk to the local community and civil society groups to discover their future vision and ambition for where they live



VALUING THE BENEFITS FROM NATURAL CAPITAL

Develop a clear understanding of the social, cultural, environmental and economic benefits provided by natural capital in urban landscapes and estimating potential improvements

FUNDING + RESOURCES FOR ACTION

Support the formation of effective stakeholder-led partnerships by increasing engagement, mobilising local delivery organisations and tapping into funding sources

PERSONAL

- Work with Health Professionals/Researchers
- Projects with Social, Mental, Physical Health Benefits
- Natural prescribing
- Targeted volunteer recruitment

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