

**The River Otter and its estuary have a long history of modification by man which has resulted in a loss of natural processes.** The effect of these changes means that flood flows are unable to pass down the river channel to the estuary, forcing them into historic floodplains. Poor drainage results in prolonged flooding of South Farm Rd, public footpaths, the cricket club and threatens an old municipal tip.

The Lower Otter Restoration Project aims to work with nature to **create a more sustainable way** of managing an important site for wildlife and the public.

## RISKS IF WE DO NOTHING

- On-going and **costly maintenance**
- **Reduced** natural biodiversity and habitats
- **Loss of public footpath access** and threats to public highway to South Farm
- **Continued flooding** of Budleigh Salterton Cricket Club
- **Catastrophic breaching** of embankments
- **Erosion** of old municipal tip

## OPPORTUNITIES IF WE ACT NOW

- Secured and **improved public access**
- Secured and **protected public amenities**
- Enhanced **natural wildlife** habitats
- Restored **natural ecological order** of the estuary
- **Restoration** of 60 hectares of wetland habitat
- Otter Valley allowed to respond and **adapt naturally to climate change**
- **Enhancement of the area** for environmental tourism
- **Enhanced conservation standing**

The graphics overleaf show the history of modification on the Lower Otter, and a vision for how it might look in the future. However, there are a number of technical, economic and social issues that must first be considered before deciding whether future intervention is desirable. A full Options Appraisal assessing the costs and benefits of a range of potential options, including accepting the current status quo, will be considered during 2016 and 2017.

### FACTS ABOUT

## THE LOWER OTTER RESTORATION PROJECT

For further information visit

[www.lowerotterrestorationproject.co.uk](http://www.lowerotterrestorationproject.co.uk)



*"Working with nature"*

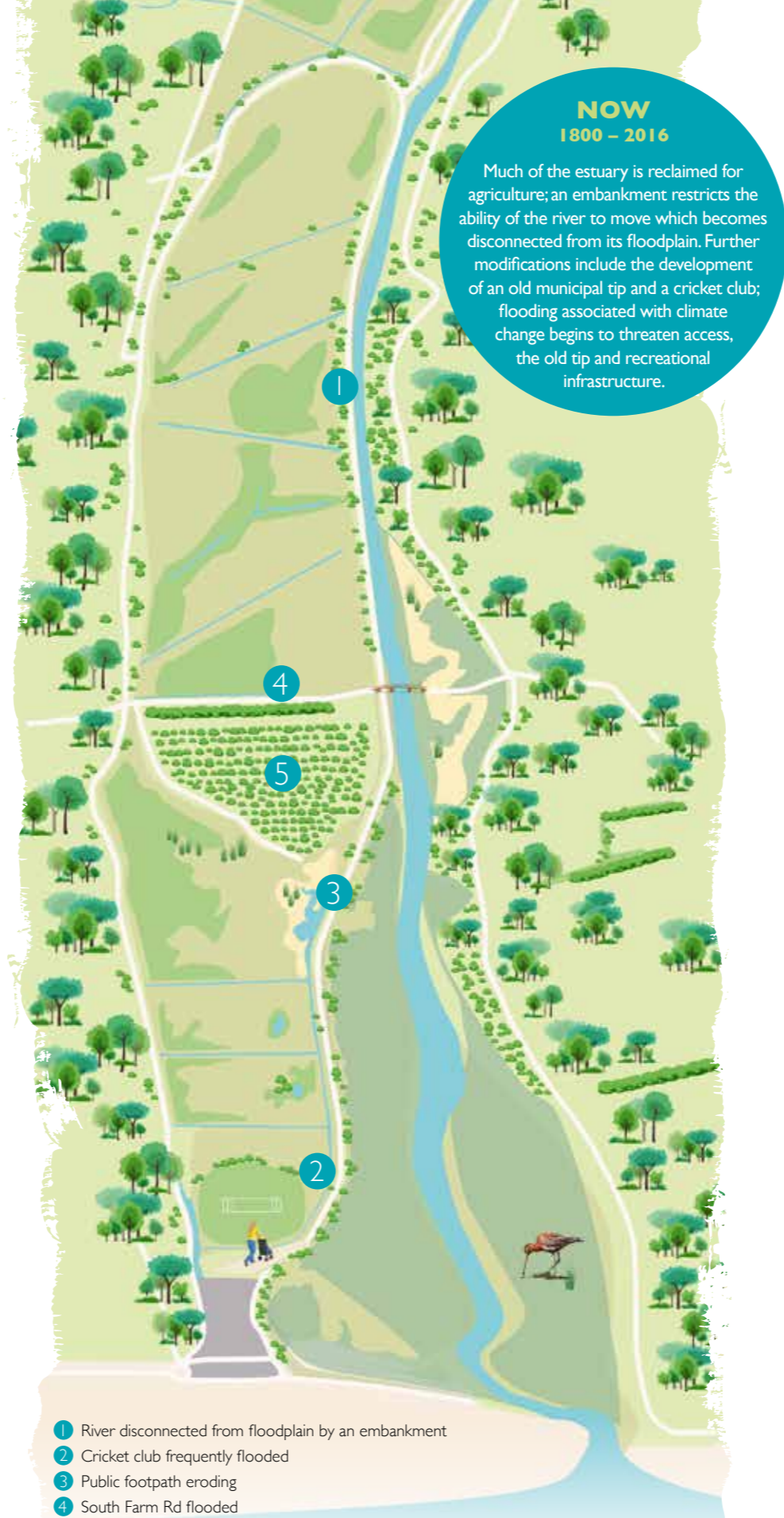


**THE PAST**  
10,000 BC - 1800

Over thousands of years the natural, meandering path of the River Otter and its Estuary are created. Wildlife thrives and is able to adapt naturally to change.

- 1 River meanders across entire floodplain
- 2 Mudflat, saltmarsh and reedbed dominate
- 3 Wildlife thrives

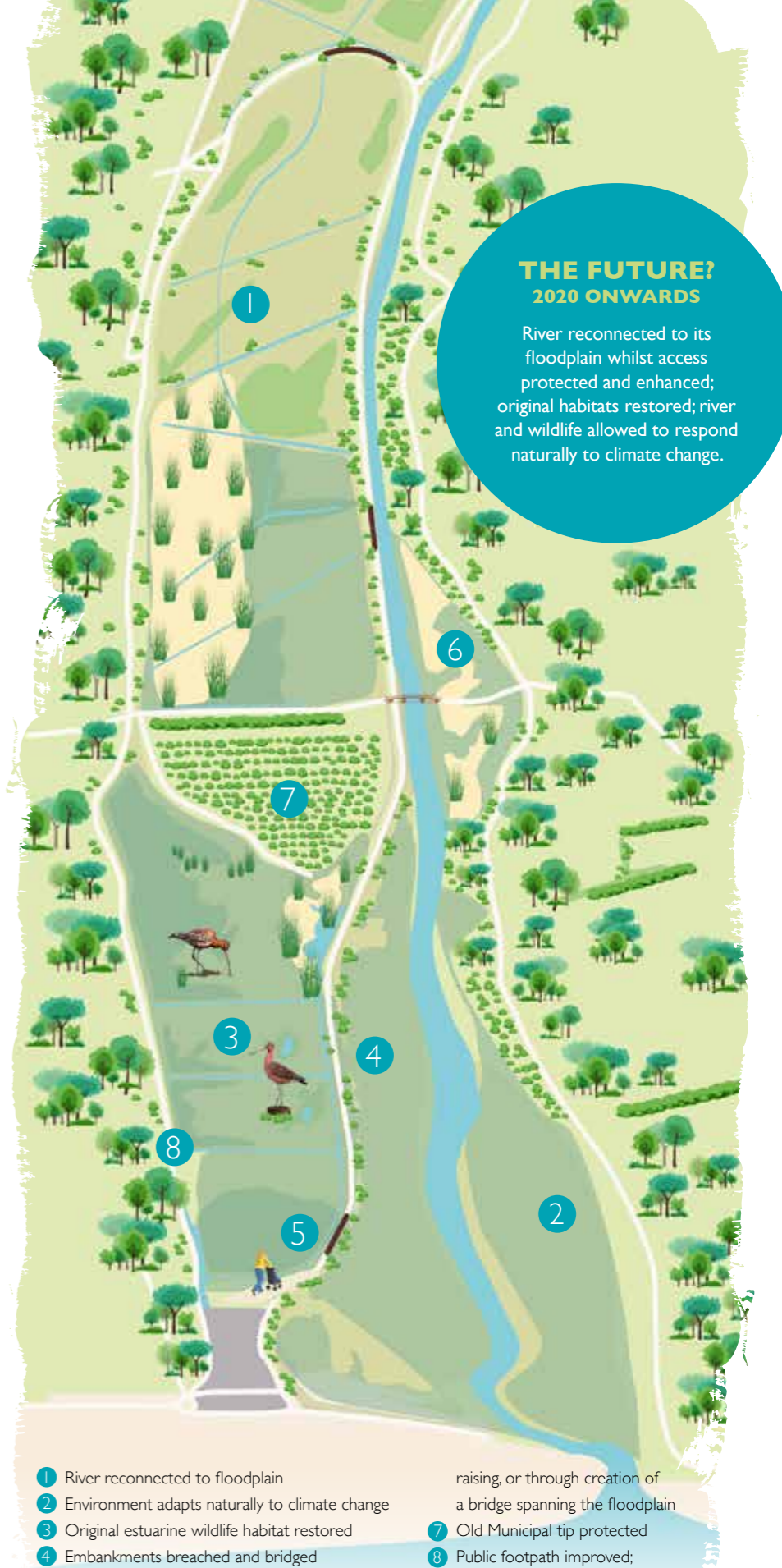
FACTS ABOUT  
THE LOWER OTTER  
RESTORATION  
PROJECT



**NOW**  
1800 - 2016

Much of the estuary is reclaimed for agriculture; an embankment restricts the ability of the river to move which becomes disconnected from its floodplain. Further modifications include the development of an old municipal tip and a cricket club; flooding associated with climate change begins to threaten access, the old tip and recreational infrastructure.

- 1 River disconnected from floodplain by an embankment
- 2 Cricket club frequently flooded
- 3 Public footpath eroding
- 4 South Farm Rd flooded
- 5 Old Municipal tip threatened



**THE FUTURE?**  
2020 ONWARDS

River reconnected to its floodplain whilst access protected and enhanced; original habitats restored; river and wildlife allowed to respond naturally to climate change.

- 1 River reconnected to floodplain
- 2 Environment adapts naturally to climate change
- 3 Original estuarine wildlife habitat restored
- 4 Embankments breached and bridged
- 5 Cricket club relocated
- 6 South Farm Rd access safeguarded by raising, or through creation of a bridge spanning the floodplain
- 7 Old Municipal tip protected
- 8 Public footpath improved; Granary lane cliffs protected

# SECURING THE OLD ESTUARY FOR *people and wildlife*