

Lower Otter Restoration Project Stakeholder Group

Statement of meeting of Wednesday 15th March, 2017

Members of the Lower Otter Restoration Project Stakeholder Group met at the Seaton Wetlands nature reserve, which is managed by the East Devon District Council Countryside Team.

The visit was at the invitation of James Chubb, East Devon's Nature Reserves Manager, and gave members of the group the opportunity to see the intertidal landscape which includes a saline lagoon created with the help of the Environment Agency.

Members of the Lower Otter Restoration Project Team and the Stakeholder Group discussed a number of potential options for the future of the estuary.

It was stressed that options needed to work financially, environmentally and socially, as well as being technically possible.

Financially, any solution would need to be affordable in itself and in respect of future maintenance, attract external funding, and win the support of the landowner Clinton Devon Estates.

Environmentally, any solution would need to create sufficient new habitat, deal with any environmental risk and may also include improved fish passage on the Budleigh Brook, which would help achieve an improved Water Framework Directive rating.

Socially, it would need to maintain pedestrian access to the existing footpath network, provide satisfactory access to South Farm, provide more certainty for local people in the face of climate change, and provide opportunities for improved recreation and tourism.

The Stakeholder Group noted that the Project Board will assess the options at a meeting in April and produce a final shortlist for public consultation later in the year.

Cllr Tom Wright

Chairman, Lower Otter Restoration Project Stakeholder Group