

Whorral to Bothal Project (2010)



The restoration of an historic riverside walk through ancient woodland was project managed Greater Morpeth Development Trust (GMDT).

The project marks the final stage in the inspirational Castle Woods & Water (CWW) initiative to restore and make country and riverside walks in and around Morpeth more accessible and inviting for local residents.

The walk follows the bank of the River Wansbeck as it meanders from the western fringes of Morpeth through to the picturesque village of Bothal on the outskirts of Ashington.

The route was identified as a priority for improvement through the initiative because – despite its popularity with generations of local people – it had become virtually impassable, muddy and unsafe for walkers through river erosion, untended overgrowth and lack of repairs and maintenance.



The walk includes several sites of historic importance, but again access had become restricted due to the poor condition of the footpath.

With the help of funding from a Groundwork Community Spaces Grant and Northumberland County Council, GMDT began repair and improvement work along the path: the worst sections of the footpath were improved and resurfaced, footbridges and steps repaired and seating with some picnic benches sited along the route to give walkers the chance to stop and admire the beautiful surroundings.

“All the work is being done in a way that is sympathetic to the heritage sites and what is a very ancient woodland,” said GMDT Project Manager Gemma Gadomski.

“Already we have made significant progress towards restoring an important recreational resources for people of all ages to use and enjoy on their own doorsteps.”

The final step was to restore and preserve the heritage sites as well as commissioning and installing signage and interpretive panels so that visitors can find out all about the history and the environment of Bothal Woods as they walk the route.

