



Ribble Life Partnership

ENGAGEMENT PLAN 2020-2023

Embedding the Catchment Based Approach across the Ribble Catchment

Synopsis

The Ribble Life Catchment Partnership has been engaging with stakeholders since 2011. This plan outlines the current situation and how the partnership will continue to successfully engage communities and organisations in the support of improving and protecting the water environment of the Ribble Catchment.

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1. Introduction

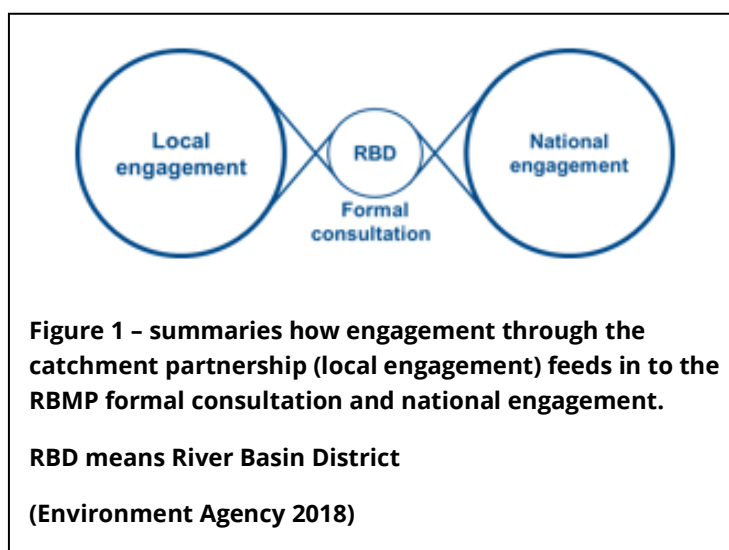
In line with Defra's Catchment Based Approach (CaBA) policy framework, the Ribble Life Catchment Partnership (RLCP) views the water environment in terms of all the ecosystem's services connected to a healthy catchment with the aim of better integrated planning and activities to deliver multiple benefits. As one of the pilot catchment partnerships in 2011, RLCP has been engaging with the many stakeholders in the Ribble Catchment for over eight years. RLCP developed its first engagement plan in 2011, revised in 2014 and again in 2017. Delivery of this broader range of benefits for people and places has since been given additional impetus through publication of Defra's 25-year environment plan, which places a focus on more integrated management of the natural environment.

As set out in the policy framework, RLCP will continue to work with key stakeholders to agree and deliver strategic priorities for the catchment and support the Environment Agency in revising and developing a new and appropriate river basin management plan (RBMP).

One of the objectives in updating the river basin management plans (RBMPs) is to make them easier for stakeholders to engage with.

Similarly, as the mandated local group supporting improvements to the water environment, we feel it is essential that the catchment partnership is also open and accessible to the many individuals, businesses, organisations and bodies who have a stake in their local water environment.

To support the achievement of the goals set out in the 25-year environment plan, and to meet our own strategic priorities for the catchment, we will continue to collaborate with key internal and external stakeholders. Through the creation of this plan we will define who our stakeholders are, why we need to engage with them, where we will engage, with whom and why. Our engagement will also align with the work of others who engage with mutual external and internal groups, for example the Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (RFCC) and the newly reformed Local Nature Partnership (LNP).



2. Our approach for engaging partners and stakeholders

Securing better environmental outcomes through engagement with partners and stakeholders requires significant effort and resource. Whilst Ribble Life board members are committed to delivering the priorities, aims and objectives of the catchment partnership, and there is funding to support the work of the catchment host, it is important to acknowledge that in addition to their commitment to the RLCP all members of the board have full time commitments of their own – whether their full time job, family commitments or other roles in the community. As in many sectors, employees and volunteers are stretched with project delivery and other priorities, which may often take priority. However, this does not mean that we cannot be effective, just that we need to be clear and focussed in how we achieve our aims. The proposed approach therefore reflects these constraints whilst ensuring we are effective, meets partners' needs and our obligations under CaBA, and helps achieve our outcomes with the resources available. We will:

1. Agree a targeted approach to engagement and collaboration with key stakeholders, informing, consulting, collaborating or empowering as needed to achieve our objectives. This will be reviewed and updated in through our stakeholder engagement plan.
2. Develop a Continuous Improvement (CI) approach to explain, embed and review our approach to engaging internal and external stakeholders. This will secure a broader understanding of the multiple benefits and stakeholders engaged in our projects and initiatives. In practise this means consulting on new projects, collecting feedback, and actively seeking new stakeholders for general inclusion and for specific projects.
3. Capitalise on existing and opportunistic engagement activities to minimise cost and maximise joint impact, such as workshops and third-party events and campaigns through joint resource planning, collaborative funding bids and project delivery.

What do we mean by stakeholders and stakeholder engagement?

For the catchment partnership we mean anyone who is affected by or has influence over the work of the catchment partnership. These might be categorised as financial stakeholders, interested parties and contributors. They could be individuals, families, community groups, interest / lobby groups, charities / non-profits, non-government organisations, local authorities or businesses.

Engagement is the practice of interacting with stakeholders – a two-way dialogue – to the overall benefit of the work of the partnership. Engagement is an outcome, helped by a process, with the aim that stakeholders will become invested in the success of our work and that their involvement will improve our effectiveness, efficiency and equitability in delivering benefits to the catchment.

The successful completion of a project or initiative usually depends on how the stakeholders view it.

3. Our stakeholders

As part of our engagement planning it is essential to frame our understanding of what we mean by increasing engagement, understand the types of stakeholders we can engage with, list who we are currently engaged with and to what extent, and recognise if there are stakeholders that we are not yet engaging with. We will do this through a five-step process that will involve:

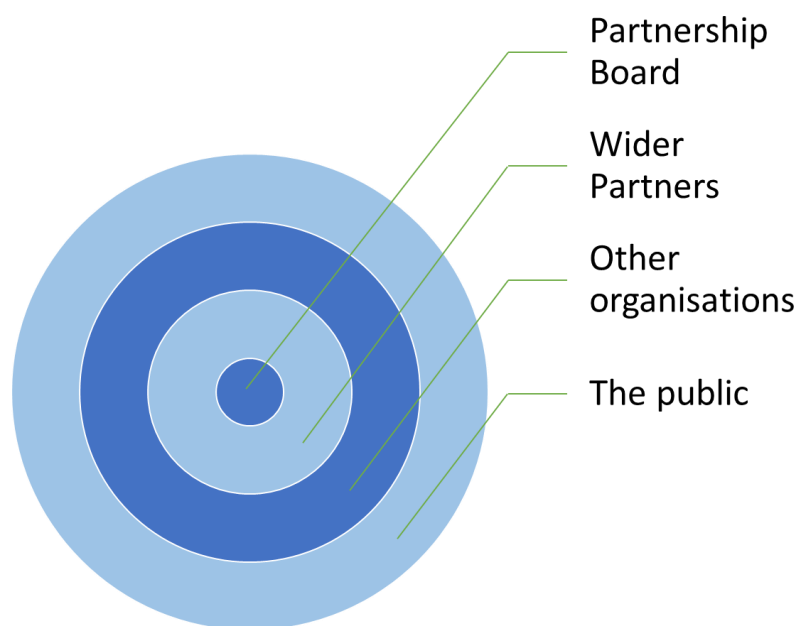
- 1) reviewing our past approach and adopting a new model for engaging with stakeholders,
- 2) describing what we mean by levels of engagement and where we're trying to increase this in partners,
- 3) categorising our stakeholders in terms of industry or shared interest,
- 4) mapping our stakeholders against current levels of engagement
- 5) considering the extent to which these stakeholders support or do not support the Catchment Bases Approach, and influence or are influenced by the water environment and other stakeholders.

These steps will help us to identify plan how we can improve our engagement over the next 12 months and formulate an action plan to achieve this.

Step 1: Before we look at levels of engagement, it is important to understand the 'layers' of engagement that have been used to guide the Ribble Life Partnership since its formation in 2011. Representing the 'ripple effect', Figure 2 shows how the work of the partnership influences others terms of water resources, water and catchment management.

One criticism of this approach is that it implies a one-way discourse with influence, information and knowledge emanating from the centre.

Figure 2 - Illustrating the different layers of engagement that have guided the Ribble Life Partnership between 2011 and 2019



Using the Scottish Community Development Centre's (SCDC) [National Standards for Community Engagement](#) as our new model for stakeholder engagement, its principles will support and inform our process of community engagement, and improve what happens as a result.

As a process and continuous feedback loop, this approach will encourage multi-way dialogue and focussed actions, supported by a robust and successful process.

Figure 3 - illustrating the SCDC National Standards for Community Engagement model



Step 2: To help organise and understand our stakeholders, we have adapted an engagement model created by NHS Lewisham Clinical Commissioning Group which provides a simple ladder of engagement, with increasing engagement, empowerment and influence as stakeholders move up the ladder towards collaboration.

By identifying what we are aiming to achieve through our engagement, i.e. do we want to inform, consult, involve or collaborate with a given stakeholder, we can devise appropriate responses and actions to achieve this.


Levels of engagement and communication	
	Collaborating Working in partnership with stakeholders in each aspect of a decision, including the development of alternatives, and the identification of the preferred solution. For example, a Ribble Life partnership project.
	Involving Working directly with stakeholders to ensure that concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered. For example, partnership boards, task groups, or through working together to deliver a project.
	Consulting Obtaining feedback from stakeholders on analysis, alternatives and / or decisions. For example, surveys, interviews, focus groups.
	Informing Providing stakeholders with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding problems, alternatives, opportunities, solutions. For example, websites, newsletters and press releases.

Figure 4 – describes the different levels of engagement from informing through to devolved / empowered decision making.

(Adapted from a model created by NHS Lewisham Clinical Commissioning Group)

Step 3: To help identify and understand the types of stakeholders we engage with we categorised the land and water resource management industries / sectors who are CaBA stakeholders using the Environment Agency categories.

Table 1 – Our land and water resource management stakeholders

1 Central Government/policy makers & advisors: across all water issues (low flows, chemicals, faecal contamination & sanitary pollutants, sediment, invasive species, nitrates and phosphorous, physical modification, flood risk management) and legislation, policy decisions, standards, integrated planning (RBMPs and FRMPs).
2 Local Government and other public sector bodies: misconnections, urban run-off, sediment, low flows, chemicals, faecal contamination & sanitary pollutants, invasive species, physical modification, flood risk management
3 Water Industry: low flows, flood risk, chemicals, faecal contamination & sanitary pollutants, misconnections, sediment, invasive species, nitrates, phosphorous (eutrophication), physical modifications
4 Environmental NGOs & wildlife: All water issues and scrutiny of our process (e.g. how we engaged) and pace, impact of changes in water environment on climate / impact of climate on water environment. Mitigation measures.
5 Business & industry: Water efficiency, chemicals, sediment, invasive species, nitrates, phosphorous
6 Fishing & recreation: Across all water issues
7 Agriculture & rural land management (including land and riparian owners): Across all water issues
8 Urban development & transport: Low flows, chemicals, faecal contamination & sanitary pollutants, physical modification, sediment, invasive species
9 Flood risk management: Physical modifications, natural flood management
10 Ports & navigation: Low flows, chemicals, sediment, invasive species, phosphorous, physical modification
11 Academia & Research: Across many issues, and processes e.g. ecosystem services; potential research topics; internships
12 Professional institutes and funding bodies: How water environment changes will affect them in terms of outcomes, cost and regulatory impact.
13 Health and Wellbeing: How a collaborative approach to improving the water environment can enhance public wellbeing
14 Culture and Heritage: Impact of measures on valued landscapes
15 Public Participation bodies, e.g. Flood Action Groups: Invitation to have a stake in improving the water environment.

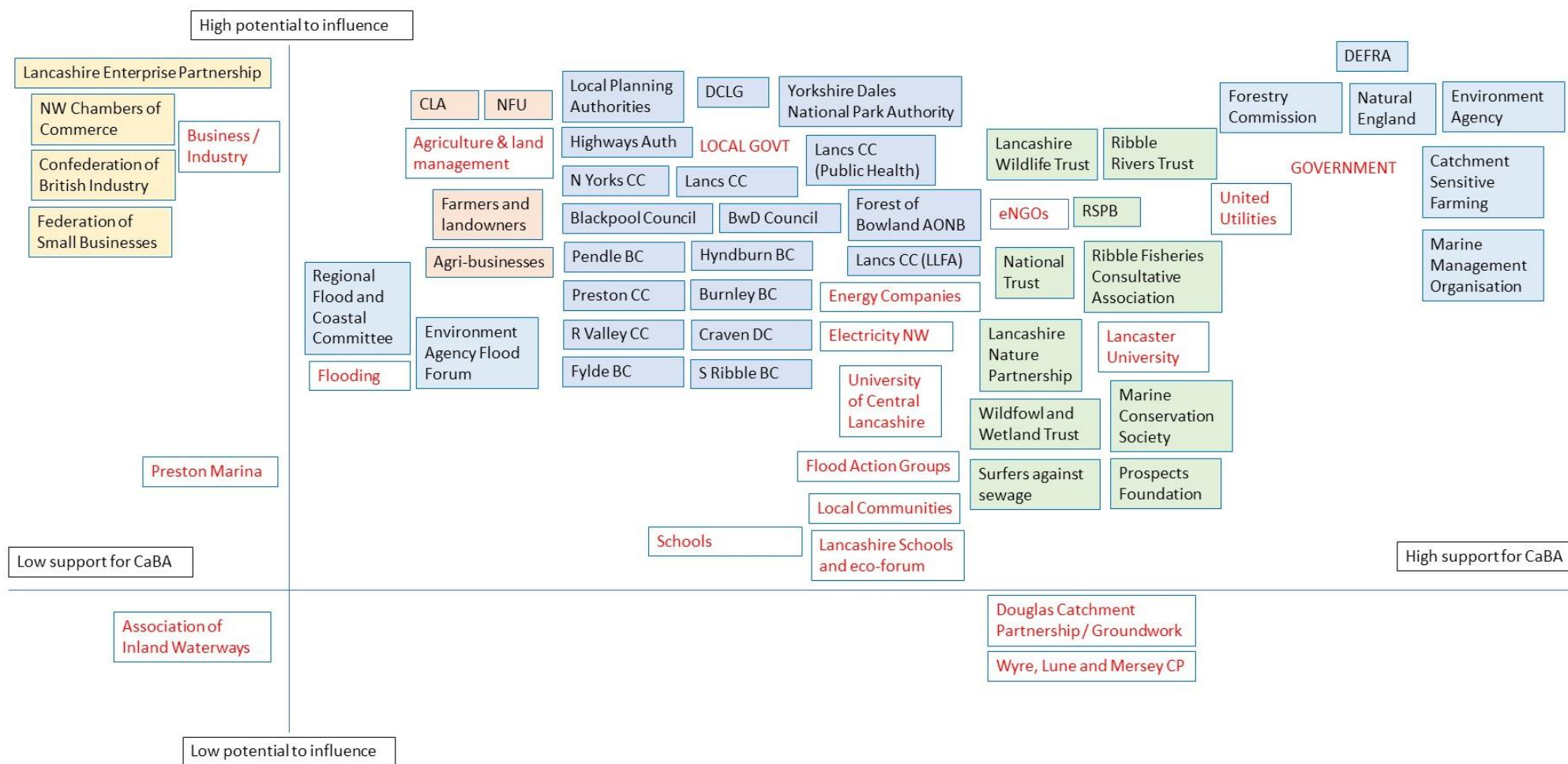
Step 4: Using these categories as a reference to identify individual organisations, we can organise each organisation within our levels of engagement model. Our current stakeholders can then be listed and organised as follows:

Table 2 - Our stakeholders and their current levels of engagement

Collaborating	Involved	Consulted	Informed	Not currently engaged
Environment Agency (1)	Woodland Trust (4)	North Yorkshire County Council (3)	Individuals, e.g. volunteers, RRT members (15)	Wildfowl and wetland trust (4)
Forestry Commission (1)	Preston City Council (3)	Craven District Council (3)	Preston Marina (10)	Marine Conservation Society (4)
Natural England (1)	Hyndburn Borough Council (3)	Blackpool Council (3)	Wyre, Lune and Mersey catchment partnerships (4)	Confederation of British Industry (5)
United Utilities (3)	Burnley Borough Council (3)	Fylde Borough Council (3)	Regional Flood and Coastal Committee (9)	Federation of small businesses (5)
RSPB (4)	South Ribble Borough Council (3)		Lancashire Enterprise Partnership (5)	NW Chambers of Commerce (5)
Lancashire Wildlife Trust (4)	Pendle Borough Council (3)		EA Flood Forum (9)	Historic England (14)
Lancashire County Council (Lead Local Flood Authority) (2)	Ribble Valley Borough Council (3)			Clinical Commissioning Groups / NHS (2)
Blackburn with Darwen (2)	Prospects Foundation (4)			National Association of House Builders (5)
Forest of Bowland AONB (2)	Surfers Against Sewage (4)			Energy Companies (5)
Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority (2)	Lancashire County Council (Public Health) (2)			Countryside & Landowners Assn (CLA) (7)
Ribble Fisheries Consultative Association (6)	Individual farmers and landowners (7)			Lancashire Nature Partnership (new) (4)
National Farmers Union (7)	Lancashire Schools eco-forum (11)			Agri-businesses (5)
Lancaster University (11)	Schools (11)			Network Rail (2)
Douglas Catchment Partnership (Groundwork) (4)	40+ local community groups / organisations through projects (15)			
Funders, e.g. National Lottery Heritage Fund (12)	LOVEmyBEACH (Keep Britain Tidy) (4)			

Step 5: By adapting the Environment Agency influence / impact model, we can considering and illustrate the extent to which these stakeholders support or do not support the Catchment Bases Approach, and influence or are influenced by the water environment and other stakeholders.

Figure 5 Stakeholder identification and analysis for the Ribble Life Catchment Partnership.



4. Reflecting our Catchment Partnership vision, goals and engagement objectives

The purpose of this plan is to define who our stakeholders are, why we need to engage with them, where we will engage, with whom and why leading to the creation of an action plan with defined objectives. It is important to remember that these objectives link to the overall catchment partnership vision and goals, whilst also aiming to increase the engagement, empowerment and influence of stakeholders.

Members of the Ribble Life Catchment Partnership have agreed the following vision:

“Through collaboration we will create a thriving land and water environment within the Ribble Catchment that will bring economic, health and social benefits for all”

The agreed goals to achieve the vision are to:

- Improve the rivers, estuary and other water bodies in the Ribble Catchment – supporting a vibrant and resilient economy and creating a great place to live
- Deliver greater impact through collaborative projects that result in improvements to our water environment with multiple benefits
- Work collaboratively to combat the causes of climate change and ensure that the natural capital (benefits and assets) of the catchment are valued and protected
- Enhance the amenity value of the water environment within the Ribble Catchment

With this vision and goals, and as a result of the identification and analysis we have done as documented in this plan, we have agreed the following engagement objectives:

1. Achieve CaBA National Success Measure (NSM) A, which requires the completion of a stakeholder analysis
2. Achieve CaBA NSM B, which requires the creation of an engagement plan
3. Secure the commitment, ownership, shared understanding and trust needed to deliver the plan and RLCP strategy
4. Increase the level of engagement of one stakeholder per year for the next five years, e.g. a stakeholder currently informed to involved, or not engaged to consulted.

These objectives are detailed within our Engagement Action Plan.

5. Engagement Action Plan

Objective	Success measures	Deadline	Evidence	Outcomes
1) Achieve CaBA National Success Measure (NSM) A, which requires the completion of a stakeholder analysis	Hold a stakeholder analysis workshop No. partners involved in the stakeholder analysis	End Feb 2020	Photos, sign in sheets, materials from the stakeholder analysis workshop	Better understanding of existing and potential stakeholders to improve future work and development of the partnership
2) Achieve CaBA NSM B, which requires the creation of an engagement plan	Creation of an engagement plan that has been created with the catchment partnership	End Feb 2020	Engagement Plan document, notes of meetings	Provide a template of actions / work to be completed over the next 12 months to strengthen the engagement and impact of the partnership
3) Secure the commitment, ownership, shared understanding and trust needed to deliver the plan and RLCP strategy	The engagement plan formally endorsed by the catchment partnership. No. partners involved in the delivery of the engagement plan	End Feb 2020 Dec 2020	Notes of meetings Notes, photos, email communication.	More action to improve the catchment, with recognition of CaBA, and delivery of the RLCP
4) Increase the level of engagement of one stakeholder per year for the next five years, e.g. a stakeholder currently informed to involved, or not engaged to consulted.	Increase our stakeholders' level of engagement in the work of the partnership. 2020 – Lancashire Nature Partnership 2021 – Countryside and Landowners Association 2022 – Business / industry representatives	Overall: Dec 2022 (One each year)	Notes of meetings, project documents, correspondence, updated table of engagement.	Wider and more productive engagement with those communities and organisations who have a stake in the water environment of the Ribble Catchment.