



Cutting down on waste

One of the main environmental challenges is for us to change the way we deal with waste. At the moment most waste is sent to landfill tips and it is easy for us not to think about the consequences. It is likely that in four years time all the current landfill sites will be close to being full. Also new European legislation will limit the amount and type of waste that can be tipped. Landfill sites are one of the cheapest ways of dealing with waste but in the near future we will have to find alternatives that are more expensive. These may also be more useful by turning waste into heat and power. We will also need to make a greater effort to reduce the amount of waste we create and to recycle more of it. We are setting up Green Business Park projects to help industries to get advice on how to cut down on the amount of waste they produce.

Whilst we are happy to offer advice on good practice we will prosecute offenders that are guilty of trying to get rid of waste illegally by fly tipping or operating illegal tips, such as Sansbury Quarry. To help catch offenders we are working closely with the Police, local authorities and the Tidy Britain Group.



Enjoying our environment

The Ribble area has a network of River Valley Initiatives to support communities with local action such as river clean ups and events. Project Officers give support and advice to local people wanting to develop their own projects. We also take part in the Green Partnership Awards that offer funds and advice to local groups carrying out environmental projects in the Boroughs of Preston, Fylde and South Ribble.

We are keen to develop access for people to riversides for enjoyment and sport such as fishing; good examples are our urban fisheries project in

Accrington and the Millennium Festival held at Padiham.

A major recreational project in the Ribble area is the Ribble Link Trusts formation of the Ribble Link to allow boats to cross from the Leeds-Liverpool Canal to the Lancaster Canal. We are playing an active role in ensuring that the project does not harm the environment or cause any flooding problems.

We are also supporting a number of local authorities to produce their local agenda 21 plans (action for the 21st Century). These will set out how people can improve their local economic, social and environmental conditions.

The Environment Agency

If you would like to see the detailed Action Plan or require further information on the Environment Agency please contact:

Stephen Hemingway at
Lutra House,
PO Box 519,
South Preston PR5 8GD
or telephone 01772 339882.

Our free 24 hour emergency hotline is 0800 80 70 60.



Making sure the sea around our coast is fit for bathing

We are investigating why the two beaches at Lytham St Annes fail to meet European standards for bathing water. The major improvements to the sewerage network have been planned to make sure that in the future bathing waters will meet European

standards. However, we are continuing to research the matter and are encouraging the government and OFWAT, the water watchdog, to require North West Water to make further improvements to the sewerage network. We particularly want them

to add extra treatment at Blackburn treatment works and to improve all the storm sewage overflows in Preston that are currently causing a problem. This has recently been taken out of North West Water's plans due to costs.



Stopping pollution

We feel it is important to protect people and our environment from the effects of pollution. In the Ribble area we are working with people to deal with pollution from old industrial sites as well as current businesses. We feel it is important to listen to people's concerns.

East Lancashire particularly suffers from minewater pollution from old collieries. There are some good examples of how these can be solved, particularly in the Burnley area. We are keen now to concentrate on improving Deerplay Colliery and

the quarry at Horton in Ribblesdale.

In rural areas some farming methods can cause pollution incidents if they are not well managed. We are particularly concerned with the use of sheep dip and the spreading of waste paper pulp onto fields; both have caused pollution incidents. We are offering advice to farmers to prevent problems in the future.

We are persuading businesses to take action to prevent pollution before it happens and developing a Green Business Park approach at Walton

Summit in Preston and Shuttleworth Mead in east Lancashire. Businesses will also be able to get advice on how to save money by using water wisely and cutting down on the amount of waste produced.

As many people live near industry we feel it is important to listen to their concerns and be open about how we work. In the Ribble area we have spent a lot of time listening to communities in Clitheroe and Oswaldtwistle to ensure that industries are regulated firmly and fairly.

This Action Plan sets out how we aim to improve the environment in the Ribble Area. One of our main concerns is to ensure that all rivers are clean and safe for people and wildlife. We want to ensure that there is enough water for our homes and industry and at the same time make sure that water is used wisely, so that we do not suffer in times of drought. It is also

important that we protect people and property from floods.

Throughout the Ribble area we are keen to prevent pollution. One of the biggest environmental challenges is for us all to cut down on the amount of waste we produce and to find new ways of using and disposing of that waste.

Much of the Ribble area is

beautiful countryside with several large towns situated along its southeastern boundary, from Lytham St Annes on the coast to Colne in the hills on the east.

The actions proposed in this plan are to help maintain and improve this environment. At the same time we aim to encourage people to appreciate and benefit from the environment of the Ribble area.



Making sure...

...rivers are clean and safe for people and wildlife

The biggest factor affecting river water is pollution from sewage. In the Ribble area wastewater treatment works and sewers need improving to help make sure that our rivers and coastal waters are clean and continue to improve.

The wastewater treatment works at Preston and Darwen have recently been upgraded. In the next five years several major treatment works will also be improved in the Ribble area as part of the largest improvement scheme for the sewerage network in England.

The exception is the works at Blackburn where we feel substantial improvements are also needed to

improve the quality of river and bathing waters.

The sewers will also be improved over the next five years to stop pollution from sewage being a problem in rivers and bathing waters. For us to benefit from this work that is being carried out by North West Water, it is important that we don't make the situation worse. One of the problems affecting water quality is that people, at home and at work, connect washing machines or other drains to the clean water sewer and deliberately pour, or accidentally spill, harmful chemicals down drains. This leads to pollution, yet it could easily be avoided and we are happy to give advice on pollution prevention.

The majority of rivers in the Ribble area have good water quality and have good healthy populations of fish. In the Rivers Hodder and Ribble a lot of work has already been done to improve the river and immediate countryside for salmon. The Rivers Darwen and Calder have poorer water quality but brown trout have been seen trying to swim over the weir at Padiham on the River Calder. One of our key projects is to create a fish pass at the weir so that fish can swim freely upstream to their traditional spawning grounds. We are looking at the possibility of creating a fish pass that can also take canoes; this would make an excellent training facility for local canoeists.

EA NORTH WEST



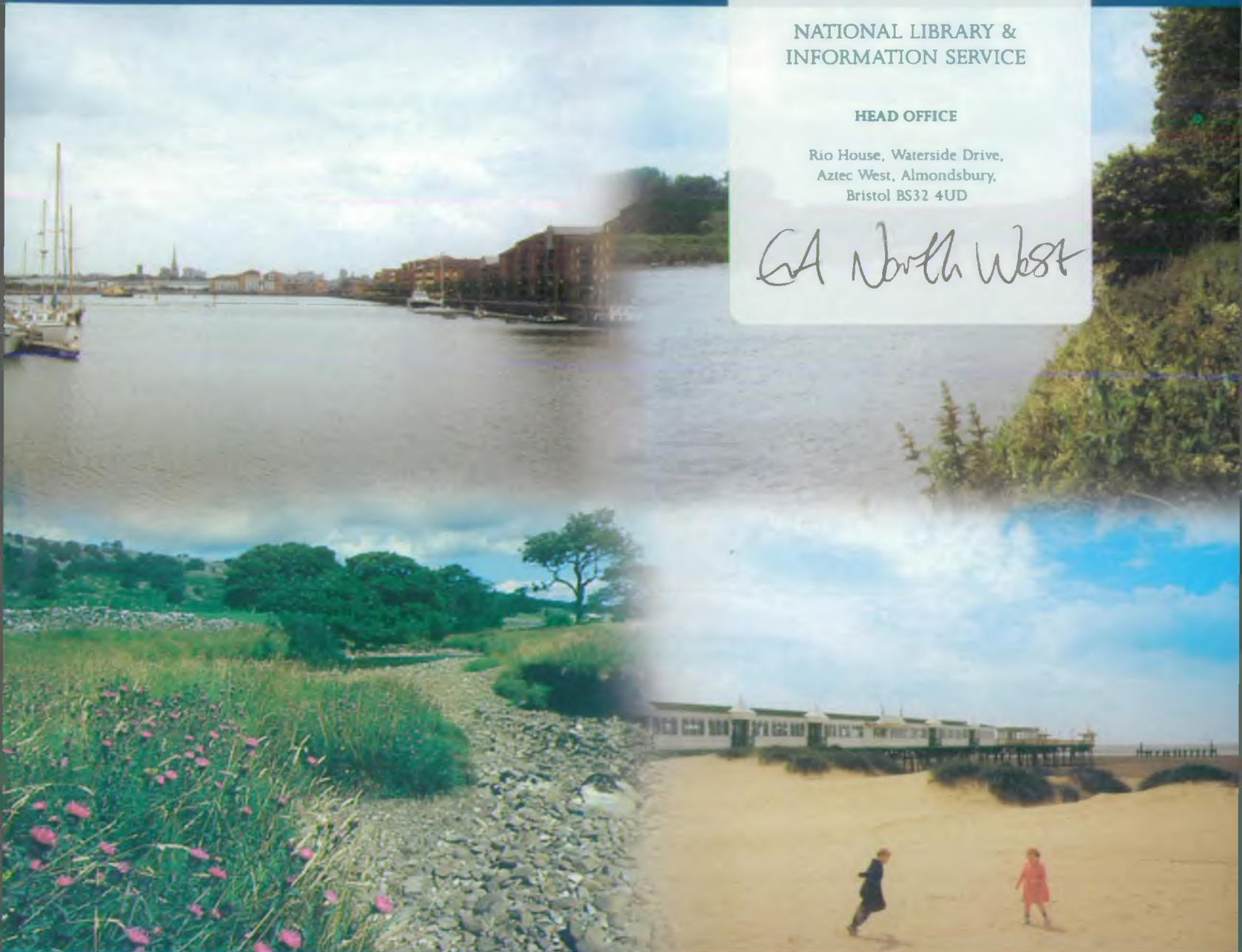
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Ribble Action Plan Summary



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