

Evaluation Report

Reviewing Progress to March 2012

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Connswater Community Greenway - Basics

Purpose:

Environmental and Community Regeneration
Flood Alleviation

Estimated Cost: £32.0m

Funders:

Big Lottery Fund's Living Landmarks Programme £23.5m
Belfast City Council £4.2m
Department for Social Development £3.2m
Department of Agriculture and Rural Development est £7.0m

Greenway Management & Maintenance:

Belfast City Council

Revised date for Completion of Construction Work :
2015

Our Vision...

...to develop a safe, accessible, sustainable greenway which is an inspirational living landmark that improves the quality of life for the people of East Belfast, now and for future generations.





Project Position

1.1 Context for the Evaluation Report

This is the second annual evaluation report for the Connswater Community Greenway (CCG) and East Belfast Flood Alleviation Scheme (EBFAS), covering the period April 2011 to March 2012.

During this year, the plans and original construction schedule for CCG were disrupted by a breakdown in the agreement between the project contractors and Belfast City Council, a key partner in the Greenway and associated flood alleviation scheme.

This resulted in a serious delay and there was no progress with the construction element of the project during this period.

The contract to deliver the CCG and EBFAS was awarded to Connswater Joint Venture (CJV), SIAC NI Ltd and Galliford Try in November 2010.

After a year-long dispute this contract was terminated in May 2012. This followed an attempted conciliation process involving the Council and the Contractor in April 2012. The report from this conciliation exercise, which was conducted by a senior London barrister with expertise in construction law, recommended a settlement sum and for the contract to be brought to an end.

Practical issues that were not anticipated by either Belfast City Council or CJV meant that it took some time to conclude this process, but final conditions of the mutual termination of the contract were agreed in May 2012.

The obvious implication of this unfortunate situation is that the construction elements of CCG and EBFAS and related components of the project have fallen well behind the schedule anticipated by the project partners.

When the original contract was terminated only one section of the project - the B10 Red Sky Culvert (see Map 1, page 3) - had been completed. Design work for a number of other project elements had taken place and this will be taken forward by the new design team and contractors.

Looking ahead, it is anticipated that construction work on CCG and EBFAS will recommence early in 2013, with a two year construction programme.

1.2 Areas of Progress

There were areas of progress in 2011-12:

- Community and stakeholder engagement work progressed.
- The PARC (Physical Activity and the Rejuvenation of Connswater) study, to assess the impact of the CCG on the physical activity, health and wellbeing of residents living near the Greenway, is on schedule.
- Communication activity to increase awareness of the Greenway and flood alleviation scheme among the local population and others continued.
- Land assembly and access arrangements confirmed.





Project Timeframe

When the annual CCG Evaluation Report for 2010-11 was completed, progress indicators for most construction elements of the project were not available. The ending of the original contract and the need to agree a project schedule with new contractors meant that construction-related progress indicators were still to be established in March 2012.

The contract dispute and associated legal process were beyond the control of the CCG Monitoring and Evaluation Team, which was not in a position to prevent the construction programme falling behind schedule.

As this is the case, we believe that it would make sense to review the timeframe linked to the progress indicators described in Table 1 (Pages 8-9).

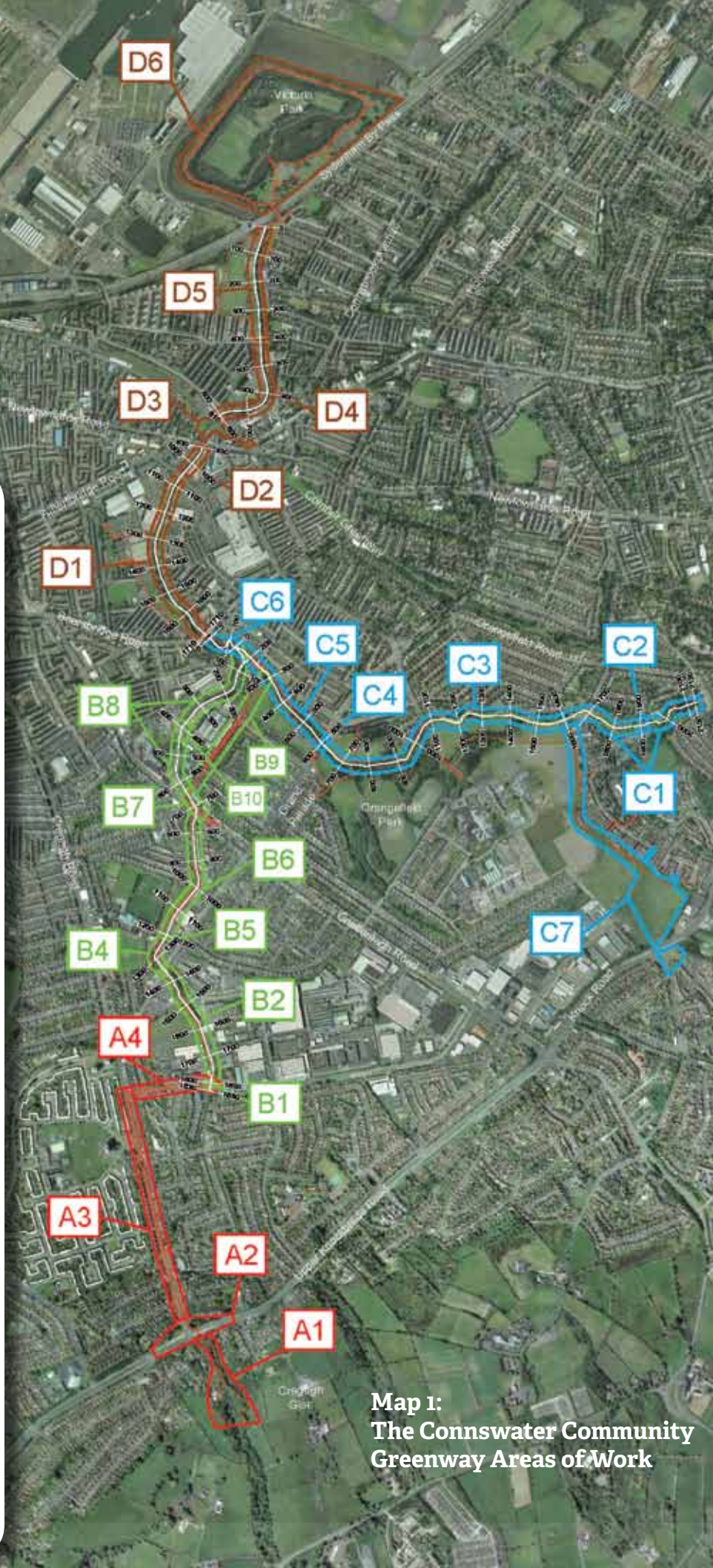


- A1 Cregagh Glen
- A2 Upper Knockbreda Road
- A3 Cregagh Road (Streetscape)
- A4 Montgomery Road (Streetscape)

- B1 Montgomery Road Culvert
- B2 Loop River Section 1-
Montgomery Road to Ladas Drive
- B3 Ladas Drive Culvert
- B4 Loop River Section 2-
Ladas Drive to Ladas Way
- B5 Ladas Way Culvert
- B6 Loop River Section 3-
Ladas Way to Castlereagh Road
- B7 Castlereagh Road Culvert
- B8 Loop River Section 4-
Castlereagh Road to Elmgrove
- B9 Castlereagh Road to Dixon Park
(Streetscape)
- B10 Red Sky Culvert

- C1 Knock River Section 1-
Sandown Road to CCG Interface
- C2 Clara Park Culvert
- C3 Knock River Section 2-
CCG Interface to Grand Parade
- C4 Grand Parade Culvert
- C5 Knock River Section 3-
Grand Parade to Elmgrove
- C6 Knock/ Loop River Confluence
Elmgrove
- C7 Knock Road to Knock River

- D1 Connswater River Section 1-
Beersbridge Road to Connswater
Link Bridge
- D2 Connswater River Section 2-
Connswater Link Bridge to
Newtownards Road
- D3 Hollywood Arches
- D4 Connswater River Section 3-
Newtownards Road to
Mersey Street
- D5 Connswater River Section 4-
Mersey Street to Sydenham Bypass
- D6 Victoria Park



Map 1:
The Connswater Community
Greenway Areas of Work



CCG – The Background

CCG in Brief

- Construction & environmental improvement work
- Flood alleviation
- Creating an amenity and focal point for the community
- Promoting a sense of community
- Community engagement
- Lifestyle change and health improvement
- Economic development
- Measuring the impact of CCG on health and lifestyle and use of the area
- Carrying out construction work in a socially and environmentally responsible way.

The Connswater Community Greenway (CCG) will be a 9km linear park through East Belfast. It will follow the course of the Connswater, Knock and Loop Rivers, connecting open and green spaces and revitalising the polluted Connswater River system.

Physical and environmental improvement is only part of the story. The Greenway is really about people, life, health and new opportunities.

It aims to reconnect the communities of East Belfast and bring the area's rivers 'back to life' as focal points and community assets, by creating vibrant, attractive, safe and accessible parkland for leisure, recreation, events and activities.

The CCG concept was developed by the East Belfast Partnership in 2006-07. It was awarded funding of £23.5 million from the Big Lottery's Living Landmarks programme – part of a total funding package of £32 million.

As a response to repeated episodes of serious flooding in East Belfast, the CCG project was extended to include the EBFAS.

These works will improve flood protection for some 1,700 properties by widening culverts, realigning rivers and constructing flood walls and embankments.

In short the Greenway project aims to bring about dramatic and positive change to the physical environment and people's opportunities, health and lifestyles.

It is hoped that people and communities who have turned their back on the dirty and neglected Connswater river system will return and that what is little more than a blot on the landscape will become a living landmark and a valuable, life-enhancing community asset.

Monitoring and Evaluation

4.1 Purpose of Evaluation

Evaluation concerns the retrospective assessment of progress against measurable objectives. CCG refers to such objectives as 'Key Performance Indicators' or KPIs.

Annual and interim evaluations of CCG aim to measure progress against the project's KPIs in three areas:

- **Environmental** – there are 13 environmental KPIs (10 construction-related / construction-dependent; 3 PARC Study environmental perception measures).
- **Social** – there are 14 social KPIs (9 measures from the PARC Study; 4 linked to community engagement; 1 construction-related).
- **Economic** – the project has 9 economic KPIs (5 related to investment, employment and tourism; 1 PARC Study measure; 1 construction-related; 1 communication; 1 volunteer involvement).

In addition, CCG aims to achieve 'excellent' status in the Civil Engineering Environmental Quality Assessment and Awards Scheme (CEEQUAL), which assesses how well project teams have dealt with environmental and social issues.

4.2 Relationship of Key Performance Indicators to CCG Elements

The KPIs described above provide an Evaluation Framework for the CCG project and are related to the main elements of CCG and EBFAS for:

- Construction and environmental improvement works.
- The PARC Study, which assesses the impact of the CCG on the physical activity, health and wellbeing of residents living on or along the Greenway.
- CEEQUAL.
- Community engagement and volunteer involvement.
- Creating awareness of the CCG.
- Promoting tourism and economic development.





Evaluation Report



Why Evaluate?

- To highlight good performance
- To encourage project focus
- To 'flag up' problems, take action and avoid crises
- To provide funders, project managers and other stakeholders with progress reports
- To reassure observers that public money is being well-managed and well-used.

5.1 The 2010-11 Evaluation Report

The first CCG Evaluation Report, for 2010-11, was a status report, which reviewed progress and specified evaluation-related issues which had to be addressed.

The issues to be addressed, so that a full-scale evaluation could be carried out, were:

- Obtaining KPIs for all construction-related objectives of the CCG project.
- Obtaining baseline data and end of progress indicators for 3 KPIs linked to the PARC Study which were not available for 2010-2011.

5.2 The 2011-12 Evaluation Report

At this stage:

- Progress indicators are not available for construction-related KPIs.
- Baseline data and end-of-progress indicators are available for all PARC study KPIs.
- Progress reports and quantitative data for community engagement, volunteer involvement and communication activities are available.

Therefore, the 2011-12 evaluation report provides:

- An overview of progress for all KPIs - see Table 1 (Pages 8-9).
- A report and comment on community engagement and volunteer involvement (Page 7).
- An assessment of the impact of communication activities (Page 10).
- Observations about the progress of the PARC study (Page 11).
- Comment on CEEQUAL (Page 12).
- Conclusions and Recommendations on the status of the CCG project (Pages 12 and 13).

Community Engagement

6.1 Progress against Key Performance Indicators

As indicated in the Evaluation Report for 2010-11, the elements of the CCG project which were related to Community Engagement were on schedule in March 2011.

The situation for the period April 2011 to March 2012 is summarised below.

KPI 3.1 - No. of community members and community groups engaged in specific CCG activities

	Target	Actual
Number of people	100	149
Number of groups	7	8

KPI 3.2 No. of schools, colleges, students engaged in specific CCG activities

The first involvement of schools, colleges and students is scheduled for 2012-13.

KPI 3.3 Engagement with key stakeholder groups (% stakeholder groups informed about CCG)

	Target	Actual
% key stakeholder groups engaged	95%	78%

KPI 3.4 Number of CCG activities/ events held

	Target	Actual
Activities/ events held	9	5

CCG Activities 2011-12

Disabled Ramble (Van Morrison Tour)
Hollow Clean Up
Hollow Spring Clean
McArthur Nursery Art Project
Stakeholder Forum

6.2 Comments

In 2011-12, two of four KPIs related to levels of community engagement were exceeded or were on schedule.

The targets for delivery of CCG events and contact with key stakeholders were not achieved and project organisers have noted that further engagement with stakeholders in health groups and organisations will be required in 2012-13.

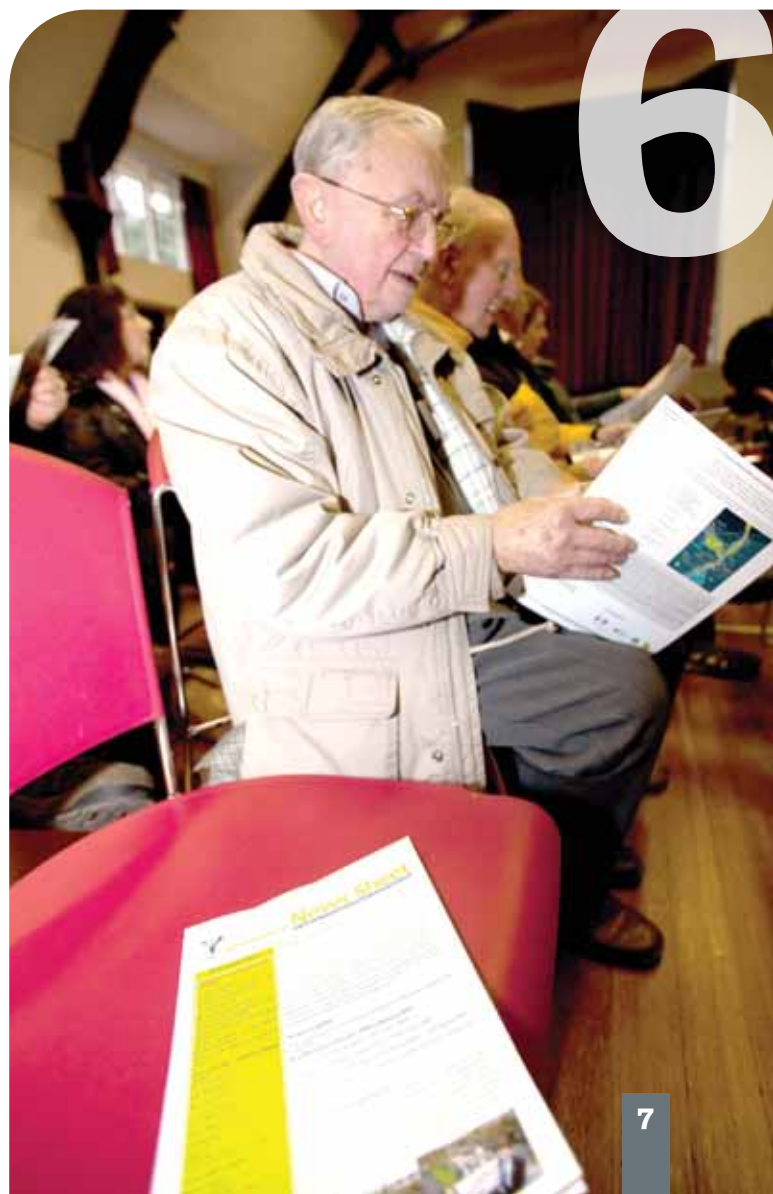


Table 1:
Connswater Community Greenway Key Performance Indicators – March 2011

OUTCOMES	THEMES	KPI No:	OBJECTIVES	Baseline as of March 2011	Progress indicator March 2011	Progress indicator March 2012	Progress indicator March 2013	Progress indicator March 2014	Target Project End
Improved urban environment	E N V I R O N M E N T A L	OBJECTIVE 1 To improve the environment in the CCG area by developing the CCG in line with the agreed design programme							
		1.1	Area of additional and improved accessible green and open space provided available	0	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	13.3 Hectares
		1.2	Kilometres of improved cycle and walking paths	0	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	16 Kms
		1.3	Number of new or improved bridges & crossings	0	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	30
		1.4	Weight of rubbish removed from rivers	0	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	1.5 Tonnes
		1.5	Perceptions of Rubbish / Litter lying around (PARC)	3	Before and after household survey (measured on 5 point scale with 1 as a very big problem and 5 not a problem)				4
		1.6	Perception of Vandalism/ Graffiti/Damage to Vehicles or Property (PARC)	3	Before and after household survey (measured on 5 point scale with 1 as a very big problem and 5 not a problem)				4
		1.7	Area of semi-natural habitat created	0	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available
		1.8	Management and control of invasive species	Treatment Undertaken 2009 & 2010	Control procedures ongoing	Control procedures ongoing	Control procedures ongoing	Control procedures ongoing	Control procedures ongoing
		1.9	Water Environment – Ecological Status	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Moderate	Fair
		1.10	Improvement to River Corridor	None	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available
		1.11	Number of Gateway Markers/ Pieces of Public Art pieces	0	0	0	2	2	2 Gateway Markers; 2 Artworks
		1.12	Satisfaction of Local Area (PARC)	2	Before and after household survey (measured on 5 point scale with 1 as very satisfied and 5 very dissatisfied)				1
1.13	Number of Native Trees planted	0	0	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available		
Healthier & more active people & communities	S O C I A L	OBJECTIVE 2 To promote physical activity to improve health and wellbeing in the CCG area							
		2.1	Total number of pedestrian and cycle users and anglers (PARC and CCG)	1,425,400	Before and after intercept survey (measured by survey of no. of walkers)				1,781,750
		2.2	Kilometres of improved cycle and walking paths (as per 1.2)	0	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available
		2.3	Walkability (PARC) WI = Walkability index	23 Wards with med - high WI	Before and after study (assessed by number of Wards with Low-Med, Med-High Walkability Index)				28 Wards with med - high WI
		2.4	Play and recreation in CCG Area (SOPARC)	285 people / hour	Before and after study (measured by survey of average no. people using defined play and recreation areas per hour)				314 people / hour
		2.5	Self reported general health (PARC)	72.6%	Before and after study (measured by % of population reporting good general health)				82.5% (UK average)
		2.6	Proportion of population meeting physical activity weekly target (PARC)	60%	Before and after study (measured by % of population meeting recognised weekly levels)				65%
		2.7	Mobility – level of use of 'active' transport methods (PARC)	29.9mns	Before and after study (measured by survey of time spent walking and on bicycle)				33mns (10% increase)

OUTCOMES	THEMES	KPI No:	OBJECTIVES	Baseline as of March 2011	Progress indicator March 2011	Progress indicator March 2012	Progress indicator March 2013	Progress indicator March 2014	Target Project End
	S O C I A L	OBJECTIVE 3 To encourage participation in the CCG project by the community and by schools and colleges using the CCG as a resource							
A stronger safer community		3.1	Number of community members and community groups engaged in specific CCG activities	7 groups 100 people	7 groups 100 people	7 groups 100 people	7 groups 100 people	7 groups 100 people	35 500
Better access to training and development		3.2	Number of schools, colleges students engaged in specific CCG activities	0	0	0	10 schools 1000 students	20 schools 2000 students	30 schools 3000 students
A stronger safer community		3.3	Engagement with key stakeholder groups (% stakeholder groups informed about CCG)	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%	95%
Better life chances		3.4	Number of CCG activities/ events held	3	3	9	9	9	30
A stronger safer community		3.5	Strength of social networks (PARC)	81%	Before and after household survey (% of stakeholders engaged with CCG)				95%
		3.6	Safety of the area from crime (PARC)	2	Before and after household survey (measured on a 3 point scale with 1 as poor and 3 as good)				2.5
		3.7	Measure of trust in neighbours (PARC)	2	Before and after household survey (measured on a 3 point scale with 1 as poor and 3 as good)				2.5
	E C O N O M I C	OBJECTIVE 4 To contribute to the economic regeneration of East Belfast through investment, employment and tourism							
An improved urban environment		4.1	Total capital expenditure attributable to CCG	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not available until contract schedule finalised	Not available until contract schedule finalised	Not available until contract schedule finalised	£38.2m
		4.2	Management & Maintenance expenditure on CCG	0	0	0	0	0	Target set when design agreed
Better access to training and development		4.3	Direct employment and training arising from CCG (measured by no. of people trained and employed; contractor to provide evidence of progress)	7 (CCG staff)	7 (CCG staff)	7 new people	4 new people		18 (7 CCG staff, 4 LTU, 7 Apprentices)
Better life chances		4.4	Number of visitors to CCG (PARC)	6%	Before and after study (Measured by % of people from outside the local area using CCG)				12%
		4.5	Number of CCG Tourism and Heritage Trails	1	1	1	2	2	6
A stronger safer community		4.6	No. people CCG media coverage & PR activities reaches	1 million people	1 million	1 million	1 million	1 million	4 million people
Better access to training & development		4.7	Volunteers hours / value	250 hours £1483	250 hours £1483	250 hours £1500	250 hours £1500	250 hours £1500	1000 hours £6000
An improved urban environment		4.8	Number of properties protected from flooding	0	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	1700
		4.9	No. of interpretative and directional signs installed	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available	Not yet available

Annual and half-year (Interim) Evaluations assess progress against individual KPI's, using a colour coding system to indicate the status of each KPI.

KPIs are defined as being behind schedule / cause for concern / action required if they fall more than 10% behind their annual performance indicator. A element of judgement will be required as the nature of KPI objectives vary greatly across the wide range of CCG aims.

- on schedule
- behind schedule, but no immediate cause for concern
- behind schedule, cause for concern, action required
- ahead of schedule
- data not yet available



Communications and Volunteer Involvement

The Communications and Volunteer Involvement elements of the CCG project were on schedule at the end of March 2011.

The situation for the period April 2011 to March 2012 is summarised below.

7.1 Communications

KPI 4.6 No. people CCG media coverage & PR activities reaches

	Target	Actual
Coverage achieved by CCG PR activity and media coverage	1,000,000	955,883

The reach achieved by media coverage is based on the estimated readership of the 3 regional and 6 local publications which published stories about the Greenway in 2011-12 – 382,353 copies x 2.5 readers per copy = 955,883 readers. This does not necessarily mean that 955,883 different people saw information generated by CCG, as some of these people may have seen more than one piece of publicity about CCG.



7.2 Volunteer Commitment

KPI 4.7 - Volunteer hours/ value

	Target	Actual
Volunteer hours	250 hrs	140hrs
Volunteer value	£1500	£830

Volunteer hours were calculated on the basis of 70 people working for an average of 2 hours per person on two CCG activities - The Hollow Clean Up and Hollow Spring Clean.

The value of volunteer work is based on 140 hours work at the minimum wage rate of £5.83 per hour.

7.3 Comments

Although the level of CCG coverage gained through publicity fell slightly below target, it was close to the forecast level and there is no cause for concern in this area.

Work to involve volunteers continued in 2011-12, but at a significantly lower level than in the previous year. Consequently, volunteer commitment levels were well below the level projected for 2011-12.



PARC Study

The PARC (Physical Activity and the Rejuvenation of Connswater) Study is a 'before and after' assessment of the impact of the CCG on the physical activity, health and wellbeing of residents living near the Greenway. The baseline data collection period has been completed and the study is on schedule.

The PARC Study research team was involved in a number of related activities and initiatives in 2011-12:

8.1 Achievements

- Work on a Physical Activity Loyalty Card Scheme won 'Best Paper' at the International Conference on eHealth, November 2011.
- A Cochrane Review entitled 'Built Environment Interventions for Physical Activity in Adults and Children' is currently in progress in collaboration with the University of Oxford.
- The PARC Study has been named as an exemplar project in terms of community engagement in research as part of a Joseph Rowntree Foundation report entitled 'How can universities support disadvantaged communities?'

8.2 Public & Practitioner Engagement

- The Research Committee for SportNI's national physical activity survey.
- Partner of the Active Belfast initiative

8.3 Conference Presentations

Members of the PARC Study research team have presented their work at a range of conferences including:

- WHO European Healthy Cities Workshop, Liege, Belgium, June 2011.
- Health-Enhancing Physical Activity (HEPA) Europe Conference, Amsterdam, October 2011
- Population Health Methods, Birmingham, April 2012.
- Methods for Economic Evaluation of Population Health, Glasgow, May 2012.
- International Society for Behavioural Nutrition and Physical Activity (ISBNPA), Texas, May 2012.

8.4 Academic Journals

Research findings from the PARC Study have been published in academic journals:

- Physical Activity Loyalty Card Scheme – Development & Application of a Novel System for Incentivising Behaviour Change – Hunter et al 2012.
- The Effectiveness of Physical Activity Interventions in Socio-Economically Disadvantaged Communities – A Systematic Review – Cleland et al 2012.

8.5 Grant Funding

The study has obtained additional grant funding from ESRC Knowledge Exchange for further work on Walkability Indices.





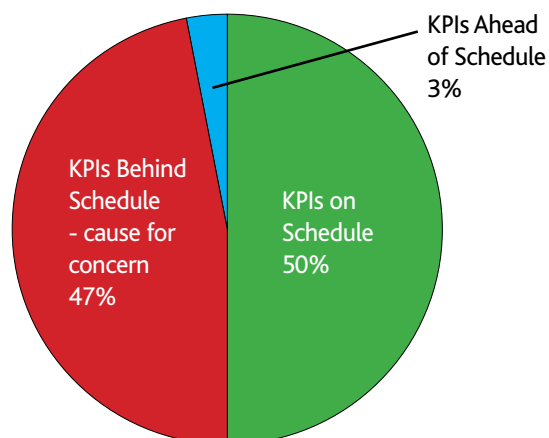
9.1 Conclusions

- Progress with the construction elements of the CCG and EBFAS was halted for the period covered by this Evaluation Report. As a result of the contract dispute described in an earlier part of the report, progress indicators for most construction aspects of the project have not yet been set and all are behind the anticipated schedule.
 - Similarly, achieving CEEQUAL status depends upon the project's approach to construction and it was impossible to make progress towards the achievement of a CEEQUAL award in 2011-12.
 - The PARC study is on schedule.
 - Community Engagement:
 - The number of community members and community groups engaged in specific CCG activities exceeded the target set in the progress indicator for 2011-12.
 - Schools, colleges and students are scheduled to become involved in the project in 2012-13 and this element of the CCG is therefore on schedule.
 - Levels of engagement with key stakeholder groups fell below the target level and project organisers have identified particular groups which require extra attention.*
 - The number of CCG activities/events held in 2011-12 fell well below the projected target.*
 - Media Coverage – the level of coverage generated by PR activity and subsequent media coverage fell slightly below the target for the year.
 - Volunteer Involvement – the level of volunteer commitment to CCG projects fell well below the target for the year.*
- * Although these components of the CCG project are behind schedule, it should be said that lack of construction progress means that a lower level of activity than originally planned was appropriate, as outreach activities need to be scheduled in a suitable manner so that interest in, and involvement with, the CCG project is linked to project progress – see Recommendations (Page 12) .

9.2 Summary:

	No.	%
KPIs Ahead of Schedule	1	3
KPIs On Schedule	18	50
Behind Schedule – cause for concern	17	47

Summary CCG Progress



Conclusions



Recommendations

As progress of the CCG project has been seriously disrupted by an unforeseen dispute, we believe that it makes little sense to continue evaluating project progress in the context of the original timeframe.

While the impact of the dispute should be acknowledged in future evaluations, we recommend that CCG partners should review the projected timeframe for the project's performance indicators, so that they:

- Reflect the realities of the time required to complete rescheduled construction work.
- Ensure that supporting activities, like community engagement and communications work, support the new works schedule and forecast completion date, so that the population in the Greenway hinterland are informed about progress and engaged in the project in ways and times which complement the revised programme, continue to regard the project positively and are keen to use the CCG when it is completed .
- The works programme illustrated on Map 1 (Page 3) is successfully completed.

Draft Design Connswater Community Greenway C.S. Lewis Civic Square





connswater community
greenway

the
way to
go

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