NENESCAPE
Year 2 Summary
November 2018 - October 2019
Nenescape brings together the aspirations of its partners to achieve a landscape-scale scheme which engages with the culture, nature and heritage of the River Nene and its valley.

We are hosted by River Nene Regional Park CIC, an independent community interest company which is creating a green infrastructure network of environmental projects from Daventry to Peterborough. The project has also been made possible by the University of Northampton, whose finance administration provides vital support to the delivery of the projects.

Nenescape is a partnership of 12 organisations working together to achieve our shared vision. Through 16 projects, we will use the history of the landscape to shape our future work, encourage exploration of the Nene Valley and secure its resilience in the face of increasing pressures.

Funded by a £2.6million grant from Heritage Lottery Fund, contributions from our partners and supported by a large number of volunteers, Nenescape is a large investment in the people, heritage and nature of the Nene Valley. The scheme began in October 2017 and will run until October 2022, with a wide range of projects, activities and opportunities to get involved.

There are 16 main projects within Nenescape across three themes:

### Listen to the Past
- Settlers of the Nene Valley
- Walking in Time
- Ice Age to the Digital Age (including 900 Voices of the Nene)
- Nene Journey
- Nenescape on film

### Explore the Now
- Nene Valley Festival
- Out to Water, into History
- Enabling Access from Waterway to Land
- Artcodes Along the Nene
- Extracts of a Changing Landscape
- Community Grants

### Secure the Future
- Building Bridges
- Resilient River
- Farming for the Future
- Volunteer Task Force
- Investing in Skills

There are also ongoing pieces of work with a view to developing a visitor management plan for the Special Protection Area, and to monitor and evaluate Nenescape.

It is my delight to present this summary of Nenescape’s second year.

After the successes of our first year, it is no surprise to see the fantastic achievements of our partners and their projects.

Heritage of all kinds needs our help more than ever before, and it is thanks to the National Lottery Heritage Fund that we are able to work with such a diverse range of organisations in the Nene Valley to restore heritage and encourage more people to engage with it.

A particular highlight of this year has been seeing so many volunteers getting involved in our work, from building projects to butterfly identification. Not only are people donating their time to the projects, but they are also learning new skills, meeting people and having a good time along the way. The difference that their generosity makes to Nenescape is incredible, thank you to them all.

I would also like to take the opportunity to thank the team delivering the projects, River Nene Regional Park who are our hosts, and all the other organisations who have supported our work.

ANDREW LANGLEY

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A Message From the Chair

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Page 13: Wildlife Trust BCN
Page 14: One to One Development Trust
Page 15: Screen Northants

Artcodes Along the Nene
Extracts of a Changing Landscape
Community Grants

Volunteer Task Force
Investing in Skills

Resilient River
Farming for the Future

Building Bridges

One to One Development Trust
Wildlife Trust BCN
Settlers of the Nene Valley
Rockingham Forest Trust at Stanwick Lakes

Barn
Over the summer of 2018, the multi-era barn was built, using construction styles from across the centuries.

Roundhouse
The reconstructed Iron-Aged roundhouse now has beautiful carvings at its entrance and volunteer-made wattle and daub walls.

Garden
Working with historical garden experts, a new garden has been created by volunteers next to the barn to showcase plants used throughout history in medicine, food and dyeing cloth.

Skills and learning
Several local schools have participated in the new schools programme and there has been great feedback from children and teachers. Additionally, volunteers have participated in heritage craft skills days.

Saying 'Thank You'
The team have thanked National Lottery players through the annual ‘Thanks to You’ campaign. The project also co-hosted a ‘Thank You’ event for the Settlers of the Nene Valley team, Nenescape partners, Nene Valley teams and volunteers.

Nene Valley Festival finale
The ‘Come and Meet the Settlers’ Nene Valley Festival finale event was a great success, attracting over 1000 cars over the weekend despite the soggy weather.

Community Grants
Nenescape
After the successful granting of funding to five community heritage organisations during Nenescape’s first year, two more grants were made in our second year. Grants to date include:

- The Museum of Leathercraft in Northampton - digitising ‘Stories of Leather’ archives
- Rushden Historical Transport Society - building an access ramp into the Goods Shed
- Irthlingborough Archaeological Society - geophysical survey work at Tannery Cottages
- Langdyke Countryside Trust - two new walking trails in Castor & Ailsworth
- Rushden Museum - new collection storage equipment
- Flag Fen near Peterborough - learning and landscape conservation skills project
- Dame Joody social enterprise - improving access onto the boat and for showings and talks about 900 Voices of the Nene in partnership with One to One Development Trust.

Walking in Time
Nene Park Trust
Walking in Time highlights the heritage of Nene Park and encourages visitors to explore the park and river through art and interpretation.

Boardwalk
Contractors finished installing the substructure for the boardwalk in November 2018, after which a team of volunteers fixed the 875m of decking (using 42,000 screws) in plenty of time for the formal opening on 21 September 2019.

Heritage research
Nene Valley Archaeological Trust (NVAT) produced a very detailed 227-page heritage audit of Nene Park last year, which has been digitised to create an interactive map. Parts of Durobrivae were excavated and documented after the geophysical survey in the interest of learning.

Celebration event
This fantastic celebratory ‘walk and talk’ event on 21 September 2019 included an exhibition promoting Nenescape and all the ways in which Nene Park is involved.

Station Master’s Garden restoration
Work to clear the site using volunteer help took place over the weekend of 12 and 13 October 2019.

River-inspired art
Nene Park was invited to take part in ‘Rivers of the World’, an education programme which connects a community in the UK with one overseas through river-inspired art. Six Peterborough secondary schools were connected with six Moroccan schools, producing six flag designs for display close to the river in Nene Park.

Walking in Time
Nene Park Trust
Walking in Time highlights the heritage of Nene Park and encourages visitors to explore the park and river through art and interpretation.
**Explore the Now**

**Nene Valley Festival**

**Destination Nene Valley**

**Launch and finale**
The Nene Valley Festival 2019 was an extraordinary success, with its launch in Peterborough Cathedral Square on 14 September and finale at Stanwick Lakes on 22 September. Attendees at the launch enjoyed natural craft activities and circus skills entertainment alongside a tank of native freshwater fish, heritage storytelling and information on a wide range of local places to visit. Nenescape partners came together to share the heritage of the valley and support the hugely successful ‘Settlers of the Nene Valley’ finale event, after a week filled with over 160 events.

**Saying ‘Thank You’**
Destination Nene Valley held a ‘Thank You’ event at Stanwick Lakes on 21 September for all the organisations who had supported the festival. A total of 95 partners attended the celebration and enjoyed meeting the Vikings who were camping there for the finale event, trying archery and axe-throwing and eating a hog roast.

**Nene Valley Festival 2020**
The next Nene Valley Festival will be held from 12 - 20 September 2020 and local organisations are encouraged to get involved with the celebrations.

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**Out to Water, Into History**

**East Northamptonshire Council**

East Northamptonshire Council is leading a project to link Wellingborough and Peterborough by cycle and walking routes, and Out to Water, Into History supports enhancements to a section of the Greenway in Rushden.

**Tidying up**
The Greenway in Rushden has undergone a series of refurbishments through Out to Water, Into History. Much-needed litter picks and vegetation clearance events with a team of volunteers have made the pathway safer and more user-friendly. Rushden Historical Transport Museum is kindly hosting a Greenway litter-picking equipment station.

**A splash of colour and a place to sit**
The Washbrook Road tunnel had become an unloved part of the Greenway, so East Northamptonshire Council held a competition for local people to help design a mural to be painted by local artists. Depicting the heritage of Rushden, including the railway, HE Bates and wildflower meadows, the mural now brings a splash of colour to the Greenway.

**Signposting**
As well as new blue directional signage to help people to get onto the Greenway from Rushden Lakes and into the town centre, new track markings on the ground give a direct lead to and from the historic centre of Rushden. The green railway symbols are a clear reminder of the path’s former life as a railway.

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**Enabling Access from Waterway to Land**

**Environment Agency**

This project seeks to improve waterside facilities, including moorings and canoe portage points and to share information about the river more widely.

**A new website**
The Environment Agency has worked with Destination Nene Valley, One to One Development Trust and Nene Park Trust to develop a new Nene Valley website to create a better digital experience for visitors to the area, boaters and other river users. The website has been designed to be accessible to as many people as possible and utilises photography provided by local people.

The website at: nenevalley.net launched in August after consultation with a wide range of people, including local boaters and other stakeholders.

**Forthcoming river access improvements**
Throughout the rest of Nenescape, the Environment Agency will be working to develop plans for improved moorings, canoe portage points and other facilities along the Nene.
Resilient River

River Nene Regional Park

This project aims to restore sites along the river to increase their resilience in flood, reduce sediment release and improve habitats for fish.

Whitemills backchannel
At this site, the banks have been re-graded to provide a better habitat for plants and animals. It will also benefit flood flows and increase capacity in the channel. As part of a training activity, trees have been ‘hinged and pinned’ (cutting a notch in the trunk, bending and securing down along the bank) to increase refuge habitat. Fencing has been erected to prevent livestock poaching the river banks (breaking down the bank by accessing the water) and reduce sediment being released into the river. Native trees have been planted to provide shade over the channel and increase stability of the bank.

Ailsworth backchannel
A section of the river bank here has been fenced off to prevent poaching and fresh gravel of varying grades has been introduced to improve invertebrate habitats and support spawning fish.

Drone surveys
Northamptonshire Biodiversity Records Centre carries out annual drone surveys of a number of sites to monitor sedimentation rates.

Nene Valley Festival
During the Festival week, the River Restoration Officer led a guided walk at Barnwell Country Park and used a flood table to engage a wide variety of age groups with how rivers function.
Access for All

**Wildlife Trust**

This project aims to create an understanding of the impact of recreational activities on birds across the Nene Valley Special Protection Area. It is an internationally important place for birds which fly from across Europe to spend the winter in the wetlands, and the Wildlife Trust, Natural England and local councils are working with Nenescape to engage people with their very special local environment.

**Mapping**

By mapping the ecological sensitivity and recreational use of places in the Nene Valley, organisations are able to balance the needs of birds with those of people. With the help of an intern from the University of Northampton based at the Wildlife Trust, this work is ongoing.

**On the ground**

To help people visiting the Special Protection Area to engage with their local environment and understand that they have a role to play in its protection, a wardening programme was created. Wardens chat to local people about the area and why it is so special. The team has also produced a leaflet, and projects for improved interpretation are in development. A series of bird surveys have been completed with a view to understanding how recreation causes disturbance to birds across four sites.

Investing in Skills

**Nenescape**

**Qualifications**

Viktor, the Resilient River Officer has bolstered his river restoration skills and has recently gained certification for river habitat surveying. Ali, the Nenescape Interpretation and Community Engagement Officer finishes her MA Heritage and Interpretation by distance learning with the University of Leicester in March 2020. First Aid training was supplied for twelve people from the wider partnership including The Ramblers and Environment Agency lock volunteers.

**Skills for the landscape**

Nene Park Trust now have an apprentice in post called Isaac who is signed up to the BALI Horticultural apprenticeship delivered by YMCA. The Nenescape Project Delivery Manager, Mandy, attended a course facilitating shared decision-making. Stanwicke Lakes’ Traditional Craft Officer completed a bow- and chair-making course and has since passed his skills onto other team members. The Wildlife Trust has hosted an intern to support a number of the ‘Secure the Future’ projects.

**Trips and visits**

In October 2019, a group of staff and volunteers from Settlers of the Nene Valley, Walking in Time and Ice Age to Digital Age visited Wroxeter Roman City. They had a tour with English Heritage staff about the work involved in building the replica Roman building and the challenges around interpreting heritage.

Farming for the Future

**Wildlife Trust and Nene Park Trust**

This project works with farmers and landowners to restore floodplain hay meadows and wetlands in order to create homes to a range of wildlife and plants.

**Restoring meadows and wetlands**

Aldwincle Marsh SSSI has been improved by a team of volunteers clearing vegetation, and a site on the river at Billing has been improved to reduce bank erosion. A series of seven wetlands along the Nene Valley have been restored thanks to the RSPB’s rotary dicher, a machine which scrapes a shallow channel along the ground that fills with water and creates a wet meadow habitat.

**Restored habitats and viewing platforms at Nene Park Trust**

Three viewing platforms have been constructed and are already well used. Interpretation boards have been installed, which tell visitors about floodplain meadows and how they are cared for. Water is being held on the meadows and there have been sightings of visiting birds. These things indicate that the works have been highly successful.

**Events and engagement**

There have been four filming sessions in pubs and on farms to create two films for the 900 Voices archive. A few local community groups have invited the team to talk about aspects of the project and have also engaged with young people through science events and Open Farm Sunday.

**Learning new skills**

A meadow ecology training session was delivered with a local conservation group for those managing meadow and wetlands. The team ran scything workshops, wildflower walks and photographic safaris in wildflower meadows at Nene Wetlands and hopes to create future opportunities to scythe and to put these skills into practice.
900 Voices of the Nene
One to One Development Trust

Archive and digital landscape
An archive of 1200 people’s connections to the River Nene was launched in December 2018, including audio clips, images, paper boats, written pieces and films. People have contributed stories of love and loss and even shared music composed on the banks of the river. One to One Development Trust also created an artistic digital section of the river that can be downloaded and explored, with ‘voices’ attached to features in the digital landscape. A new digital experience called ‘Nenespiration’ will be made available during 2020, focussing on people’s aspirations for the future of the Nene Valley.

Launch
The project launch was a fantastic event at Peterborough Cathedral, decorated with lights, an origami art installation and lots of projections including the archive and digital landscape. The room was full with 80 guests including project contributors, some of whom performed, as well as showing films created throughout the project and giving a tour of the archive. The feedback from the event and the project was fantastic.

Community grant
A community grant that brought 900 Voices of the Nene into partnership with Dame Joody, a boat-based social enterprise, has extended the reach of the project to Stanwick Lakes for the Nene Valley Festival, Becket’s Park and the University of Northampton.

Extracts of a Changing Landscape
Nenescape

John Clare, nature and creativity
Extracts of a Changing Landscape brings together the work of John Clare, the nature of the Nene Valley and creative workshops to improve people’s mental wellbeing. The project will begin in Year 3, working with a variety of partners in the fields of mental health, nature conservation and visual arts.

Nenescape on Film
Screen Northants

Nenescape on Film will document elements of Nenescape and provide interpretive films to engage a wider audience with the Nene Valley, as well as delivering creative film projects.

‘Nene’ the feature film
Over the summer of 2018, Screen Northants worked with local disadvantaged young people to make a full length, fictional feature film showcasing the beautiful River Nene. A range of film professionals helped to complete the film, including editing, colouring and sound mixing. The musical score was composed by local composer Joel Harries. There was a preview screening at the Northampton Filmhouse and the latest version was shown in a ‘cast, crew and VIP’ screening kindly hosted by Cineworld Sixfields, Northampton, receiving very positive feedback: ‘A great, moving film. Balanced the gorgeous Nene setting against the emotional story. Thank you for inviting us to the screening, a brilliant way to demonstrate the skills in the sector and beauty of the county.’ Not only has the film been enjoyed by audiences, but the participants have found that being part of the production team has changed their outlook.

‘All Aboard for Rushden’ short films
Screen Northants have also been involved in making some short films for the ‘All Aboard to Rushden’ digital heritage interpretation of the Greenway in Rushden.

Northampton Film Festival photo shoot
The annual Film Festival held in Northampton by Screen Northants is themed ‘Kind of a Big Deal’ in 2020. Nenescape supported a ‘Nene vs Cannes’ Film Festival photoshoot which took place on the river on a boat. As the Northampton Film Festival will be held at the same time as the Cannes Film Festival, Screen Northants will be promoting the Nene ‘river area’ as an alternative to the French Rivieria!
Artcodes Along the Nene

**Nenescape**

**An exciting technology**
Developed by the University of Nottingham’s Computer Science department, artcodes is a relatively new technology that allows people to interact with objects and connect physical items to digital experiences. Working in a similar way to QR codes, the technology allows a smartphone or tablet to ‘read’ a special image’s hidden code, but can also work with coded images drawn by anyone.

**‘All Aboard for Rushden’**
A partnership of organisations including Rushden Town Council, Screen Northants, Rushden Historical Transport Museum, Destination Nene Valley and the University of Nottingham collaborated to produce an app. Based on a real life incident in 1911 when a train ran over a bag of mail, visitors can walk along the Greenway between Crown Park and the town centre and use the app to scan pieces of art to open letters and find out about some of Rushden’s interesting characters through short films. Visitors who have already seen the films once are recommended to take a second look at them - all may not be quite the same on a second viewing...

**Spreading the word**
Other organisations along the Nene Valley may also soon begin using artcodes as Nenescape and the University of Nottingham plan training sessions and start introducing the technology to help interpret the heritage of the Nene in new ways.

Nene Journey

**Northamptonshire Music & Performing Arts Trust**

**Songbook**
Following on from the three awe-inspiring launch concerts in November 2017 and March 2018, where over 1500 children performed a specially-composed piece of music called ‘Nene’, work has continued behind the scenes. Composer Benjamin Till (a former pupil at NMPAT) has arranged sections of the original piece and some new music to create a book of songs ready for performance by community choirs in the Nene Valley and beyond.

The songs follow the river downstream, starting with ‘The Source’, set at Badby. Other songs evoke swimming in the river at Midsummer Meadow in Northampton, Mary Queen of Scots’ imprisonment at Fotheringhay and the river flowing backwards beyond the Dog-in-a-Doublet lock east of Peterborough.

**Community choirs**
The songbook will be available online for free, with a limited number of hard copies distributed too. Nenescape encourages all interested choirs to have a go at performing one or more pieces and get in touch with us to show us the results.

**Ice Age to Digital Age**

**Nenescape**

**Archaeological finds**
Northamptonshire’s only volunteer team brought together to support the local Finds Liaison Officer, Ellie Cox, have given a total of nearly 500 hours and made 80 objects from the Nene Valley available to the world. Each object undergoes a painstaking process of recording, from measuring its dimensions, to weighing it, photographing it and identifying it so that it can be uploaded onto the British Museum’s Portable Antiquities Scheme database. The objects include Roman coins, buckle and strap fittings, pieces of worked stone and ceramics.

**Mills research**
A small team of volunteers are creating a digital map of all the mills on the Nene, past and present. They’ll be linking up the work of Northamptonshire Archives and the Mills Archive to create a research resource that will be made available worldwide, sharing the ancient to modern history of harnessing the Nene’s power.
Investing in the Nene Valley

This table shows the total investment in the Nene Valley that Nenescape has brought together. The top table shows figures for Year 2 only, and the bottom table shows the total invested so far, including both Years 1 and 2.

### Total investment (Year 2 only)

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### Total investment to date (Year 1 and Year 2)

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**Who’s Who**

### Board

Chair - Andrew Langley, Destination Nene Valley
John Griff, Independent
Kathryn Hardcastle, River Nene Regional Park
Rachel Mallows, independent
Sharn Matthews, independent
Adrian Oates, Nene Park Trust
Jeff Ollerton, University of Northampton
Justin Tilley, Natural England

### Core Team

Amanda Johnson, Project Manager
Alison Brand-Barker, Interpretation and Community Engagement Officer
Denise Horn, Project Support Officer and Volunteer Co-ordinator

### Lead Contacts for Projects (Correct at December 2019)

**Settlers of the Nene Valley:** Becky Gill, Stanwick Lakes
**Walking in Time:** Adrian Oates, Nene Park Trust
**Ice Age to Digital Age:** Alison Brand-Barker, Nenescape
**Nene Journey:** Alison Brand-Barker, Nenescape
**Nenescape on Film:** Becky Adams, Screen Northants
**Community grants:** Amanda Johnson, Nenescape
**Nene Valley Festival:** Karen Williams, East Northamptonshire Council
**Out to Water, Into History:** Lucy Hawes, East Northamptonshire Council
**Enabling Access from Waterway to Land:** Candy Reed, Environment Agency
**Artcodes Along the Nene:** Alison Brand-Barker, Nenescape
**Extracts of a Changing Landscape:** Alison Brand-Barker, Nenescape
**Building Bridges:** Kelvin Allen, Angling Trust
**Resilient River:** Viktor Tzikas, River Nene Regional Park
**Farming for the Future:** Helena Darragh, Wildlife Trust BCN
**Volunteers:** Denise Horn, Nenescape
**Investing in Skills:** Amanda Johnson, Nenescape
**Access for All:** Matt Johnson, Wildlife Trust BCN

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Thank you

to our funders, partners and volunteers

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