

Friends of Bradford Beck Pathways to a Sustainable Future

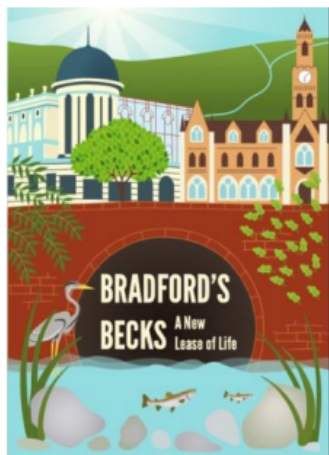
This report is based on outputs from a visioning workshop held on 13th October 2025.

The workshop was attended by 30 people, some of whom may also have completed a short questionnaire sent in advance of the meeting.

This document consists of three parts:

1. An executive summary
2. A more extensive analysis of the outputs of the workshop, and
3. Appendices designed to offer deeper insight into the inputs.

It is designed to be useful for those planning the future of FoBB.



Friends of Bradford Beck – Connecting people with their rivers since 2010

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Executive Summary

Friends of Bradford Beck (FoBB) stands at a pivotal moment. Over the past decade, it has grown from a small volunteer group into a recognised, respected force for the restoration and celebration of Bradford's becks. A recent workshop and consultation have shown that FoBB's work is valued by a wide network of partners – including the Aire Rivers Trust, Bradford Council, Yorkshire Water, the Environment Agency, local schools, and community groups. There is now a shared recognition that the next phase of FoBB's development must focus on sustainability, leadership, and clear direction.

A comprehensive review and strategy workshop identified both significant strengths and key challenges. FoBB's strengths include its strong reputation, active partnerships, and passionate members. The opportunities ahead include growing public awareness of rivers, increasing environmental funding, and a growing appetite across Bradford for visible change to the city's waterways. However, the group also faces pressing weaknesses: a lack of formal structure, dependence on a few individuals, and the need for stronger leadership and succession planning.

Participants developed a Theory of Change for the beck system that sets out a clear long-term vision:

Clean, living and loved becks - free from pollution, rich in wildlife, and valued by the people of Bradford as spaces for nature, learning and wellbeing.

To achieve this, FoBB will need to:

- Strengthen its organisational structure and leadership;
- Build an inclusive and skilled committee supported by active volunteers;
- Secure sustainable funding and income streams;
- Deepen community engagement and educational partnerships;
- Work strategically with ART, statutory agencies, and local authorities to deliver tangible environmental outcomes.

The report proposes three priority areas for decision and action:

1. **Agree a future structure** – decide whether FoBB should operate independently, as a subsidiary of the Aire Rivers Trust, or through a hybrid model.



2. **Recruit a voluntary leader or chair** – an inspiring and capable individual who can provide vision, coordination and energy.
3. **Adopt a clear implementation roadmap** – focusing on leadership recruitment, community engagement, and early wins that demonstrate progress.

The enthusiasm, knowledge and commitment revealed in recent work demonstrate that FoBB has the foundation for long-term success. With the right structure, leadership and support, it can continue to inspire, connect and deliver a cleaner, healthier and more celebrated network of becks for Bradford.