

# Eaves Brook Bridge, Grange Valley, Preston, Lancashire

**Date:**  
2007

## **Background:**

The wooden bridge over Eaves Brook in Grange Valley was in a bad state of repair. It had been in place for 10 years and, throughout its history, had been subject to attacks from vandals. The bridge had been set on fire on at least three occasions and had undergone repairs to ensure it was maintained in a safe state.



Although the bridge was something of an eyesore, it was vital to local people. It formed part of a footpath linking the communities of Grange and Brookfield; providing a shortcut between the areas via a public green space.

In 2006, the Environment Agency made £20,000 worth of improvements to Eaves Brook in Grange Valley – re-profiling the brook, adding small waterfalls to improve water flow and broader sections and meanders to promote different habitats. Children from local primary schools planted a reed bed to help filter pollution from the water that originates from run-off from the M6 motorway and wrong-connections from the nearby industrial estate.

## The project:

The Environment Agency also made £12,000 funding available through the Water Framework Directive for community projects. This money was entrusted to the Mersey Basin Campaign. Eaves Brook Linear Park Steering Group decided that this money could be used to replace the bridge and produce an interpretation leaflet and the Action Ribble Estuary Co-ordinator managed the bridge project.

After putting the bridge design out to tender, a local artist Chris Davis was chosen for his novel approach to the design. His idea was to involve local children in animation workshops about the creatures that live in the valley. Penwortham Blacksmiths from Howick Forge were contracted to produce and install the bridge because of their good reputation.

Children from three local Primary Schools (Grange, Greenlands and Moor Nook) took part in the animation workshops lead by Chris and assisted by Preston Park ranger Harvey Thorpe and Lancashire Wildlife Trust officer Julie Livesey. Their initial thoughts about a creature living in the valley were recorded on paper then transferred into three-dimensional figures in plasticine. In small groups they were taught how to animate their characters to produce a short film. Chris Davis used the children's ideas to produce metal shapes that could become part of the design of the new bridge. The overall design compliments the fretwork appearance of the gates to the formal Grange Park on Thornley Road.



The children also submitted pictures to a competition. The winning entries were used to add colour to a leaflet about Grange Valley, edited by Julie Livesey. This was produced to match the style of a leaflet about a neighbouring park. Certificates were presented to the children whose pictures were used.



Councillor Kate Calder, who attended the opening of the bridge, said:

“This has been a great project with so many local children involved. A safe crossing point and a fantastic piece of art have been provided for the whole community”.



**Project value and funding sources:**

	Cost	Cost incl. VAT
Workshops and bridge design (C Davis)	£ 907.00	£ 907.00
Printing of 5000 leaflets (Badger Press)	£ 522.00	£ 522.00
Engineer's Drawing (LCC)	£ 350.00	£ 350.00
Manufacture & installation of bridge (Howick Forge)	£ 9862.00	£ 11587.85
<b>Total</b>	<b>£11641.00</b>	<b>£ 13366.85</b>

## **Who was involved**

The members of Eaves Brook Linear Park Steering Group were involved:

Preston City Council  
Lancashire County Council  
Lancashire Wildlife Trust  
Environment Agency  
Action Ribble Estuary (Mersey Basin Campaign)  
Ribbleton One Voice

## **Future care**

It is understood that the bridge is now the property of Preston City Council, but this has not been formalised.

## **Lessons Learned**

- The bridge is respected because the community was involved in its design. It far better to include people in projects rather than impose projects upon them.
- It is often prudent to approach local authorities for funding towards the end of the financial year. This approach was successful in obtaining funding for interpretation from Lancashire County Council and Preston City Council.