

The Wider Wylye Strategy

2022-2023 Review

Bigger, and better connected habitats

Well connected, naturally functioning river and floodplain habitats not only benefit wildlife, they also help purify water, store carbon, and reduce flooding. Informed by an extensive survey of the Wylye and tributaries in 2021/22, the project team aim to deliver a Landscape Recovery Project through the Government's new agri-environment scheme. Working with the Wylye Valley Farmer group, the team aim to investigate and deliver a river restoration project over 20km+ of the Wylye and adjacent valley floodplains.



Slowing the flow

Nature-based solutions such as natural flood management not only help slow the flow of surface water through a river system, they also provide added benefits for biodiversity and water quality. Working with farmers in the headwaters of the catchment the team successfully planted 1.5ha of woodland and dug a scrape to intercept a flow pathway connecting arable fields with the Wylye in Monkton Deverill. In addition to this 400m of the Wylye was fenced and planted to create a riparian buffer strip, protecting the river from livestock poaching and intercepting flow entering the channel.



A partnership project, led by Wessex Rivers Trust and Wiltshire Wildlife Trust and delivered alongside members of the Hampshire Avon Catchment Partnership, angling clubs, local farmers, and landowners.

Kindly part funded by the Wessex Water Partners Programme.

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Educating the next generation

Our education & engagement team delivered 7 sessions to over 150 children at local primary schools. Children love getting in the river and finding out more about life beneath the surface of the Wylfe. We'll be continuing our education programme in to 2023, 2024 and 2025.



Testing the waters

With local communities and farmers in the Wylfe catchment committed to protecting and enhancing this special river, our project team have helped establish water testing and aquatic riverfly monitoring throughout much of the river. Complimented by regulatory and water company led testing, we anticipate this localised and regular 'citizen science' based programme will help identify where key actions for improvements to river health are required.



More trees in rivers

Following on from woody habitat work in the channel in 2021-22 the team continued to use trees to create in channel habitat in Steeple Langford. This creates flow diversity, marginal habitat variation and cover for small fish and invertebrates.



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