

MAIN AIM

Working in partnership at landscape scale to increase biodiversity by delivering catchment nature-based solutions.

Dorset Wild Rivers is an established model which has been operating in Dorset for over 20 years. This phase of DWR brings together a team across four partner organisations to enable and implement on-the-ground practical works and engagement to increase biodiversity across targeted rivers and catchments.

The lead delivery organisations, Dorset National Landscape, Dorset Wildlife Trust, Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group South West, now joined by the National Trust Purbeck Estate, will work with other partners to deliver an integrated programme in priority catchments across the county.

THEMED ACTIVITIES:

- 1. Delivering catchment nature-based solutions** which allow for natural processes within river channels, floodplain and wider catchments, allowing space for water and moderating low and flood flows. Enable clean water through addressing sediment and nutrient inputs at source, disconnecting flow pathways. Also improving soil health and embedding resilience to change (climate and social and economic).

Outcome: Actions will have taken place that will improve the ecological condition of the water environment.

Outputs include:

- 15km of rivers & streams enhanced, including in-stream works and adjacent livestock control and habitat buffering;
- 10ha of wetland created or enhanced;
- Effectively Working with Natural Process to reduce flood risk in two catchments;
- 12ha arable reversion & low-input grassland (or similar) in high-risk areas for diffuse water pollution;
- 6ha wet woodland planting in areas identified by the EA as most beneficial in reducing flood risk;
- 3 x trial pilot catchments investigated for feasibility of Dorset-wide mink eradication and work with 8 x farmer cluster groups with an aim to develop water vole recovery plans.

- 2. Working in partnership** provides the foundation upon which the work can be built. Increased scale of positive action across our partnership to deliver and make a difference in our precious rivers and catchments. We will also embed our partnership in other initiatives and maintain an outward-looking focus.

Outcome: Collaborative approach to delivering sustainable landscape scale habitat restoration through catchment nature-based solutions

Outputs include:

- Continued and expanded Dorset Wild Rivers Partnership
- Support provided to 3 x existing and any newly developing Landscape Recovery Schemes

- Support 2 x existing and any newly developing Natural Flood Management Schemes
- Support the delivery of the river elements of the Dorset Local Nature Recovery Strategy
- Deliver annual networking events for partners and stakeholders

3. Engagement - beyond awareness raising. High quality engagement opportunities leading to empowerment to take action across all levels – individuals, farmers, communities and organisational. Following a model that with awareness we can inspire and enable action, which then builds a movement for change: As a result more people will be not just aware but involved and leading change in their own patch.

Outcome: Greater awareness of the issues facing the water environment, leading to positive behavioural change

Outputs include:

- A targeted series of farmer-focused events, meetings and advisory reports;
- Work with stakeholders in priority catchments to produce catchment action plans;
- Engagement with Parish Councils;
- 30x events
- 200 people connected to DWR through citizen science
- Actively working with the community through 50 volunteer opportunities totalling approx. 2000 hours

PROJECT AREA

Dorset Wild Rivers is a county-wide project but will focus on waterbodies where our methodology will make the greatest impact and is most useful to the Catchment Partnerships. Each of the main partner organisations will lead on different geographic areas of the project, as well as supporting the other partners where particular specialist knowledge is needed.

Dorset National Landscape lead work on the West Dorset Rivers and Coastal Streams, in particular on the Char, Monkton Wyld Stream, Simene, Brit, Mangerton, Asker and Swan. DNL have strong skills in partnership development, natural flood management, community involvement, citizen science and monitoring.

Dorset Wildlife Trust has a particular focus on the catchments related to the charity's key land holdings and at catchment-scale. Working on both its own land and with the land managers around those sites. Examples of where work is planned include on and around Lyscombe Nature Reserve (Little Piddle and Chesel in the Devil's Brook catchment), on and around Winfrith and Tadnoll Nature Reserve (Win and Tadnoll Brook catchments) and Nunnery Mead Nature Reserve on the Frome. The organisation has a particular focus on wetland restoration (stage zero approaches), beaver-ready landscapes, species recovery, citizen science and achieving the '30 by 30' target for landscape-scale nature recovery.

FWAG South West are focused on working with farmers and farm clusters to achieve the project outcomes. This work lies within a number of catchments through three main work streams:

- Dorset Rural Run-off - 23 locations identified with issues of rural land use impacting on overland flows. Using Nature Based Solutions for climate resilient communities.
- Engagement with 8 farm clusters annually to deliver Dorset wide initiatives and to identify opportunities for implementing LNRS water-based priorities and promote habitat connectivity.
- Using new Higher Rivers and Wetland actions to identify nature based solutions to riparian habitats whilst reducing downstream flood risk, initial priorities include in the Lodden, Lower Piddle and Corfe.

National Trust Purbeck Estate are focused on the Swan Brook and Corfe catchments, working with communities, land managers and on their own holding, including with tenants. Building on existing work on the Swan and taking that approach further and aiming to work with a new Landscape Recovery partnership. The organisation has a focus on natural flood management, beaver-ready landscapes and developing community-led action.