



River Biss



February 2025

### Background

The River Biss comprises of 5 main tributaries, all of which join around Trowbridge. Some streams rise from the chalk towards Westbury and others the greensand around Trowbridge. They are however all subject to the joint pressures of urban and rural pollution. The ABBA project seeks to mitigate this through a number of practical interventions, and public and landholder engagement.

### Key Successes

- 920m of river restored/due to be restored
- 10 new or restored great crested newt ponds
- 20 farms actively engaged
- 4.6km of the Lambrok surveyed and cleared of Himalayan balsam
- More than 500 people engaged through the project
- 22 people taking meaningful action to help protect rivers.

The seed funding provided through the Wessex Water Partners Program has been highly successful in directly delivering public engagement and practical river restoration, as well as leveraging significant amounts of match funding to delivery larger scale restoration works. These restoration works have involved the creation of large wetlands at Southwick Country Park and Biss Meadows, as well as in channel and riparian restoration along the Bitham Brook and river Biss itself.



The public facing elements undertaken also covered a range of activities and topics. The Biss catchment is a stronghold for Water Guardians and much of the catchment is regularly monitored for signs of pollution. Similarly, the riverfly monitors trained through this project will further assist in flagging pollution incidents and track trends in aquatic invertebrates. The scale of public engagement through the ABBA project, including the Town Pond element, as well as WWT's Country Comes to Town event has been unparalleled, allowing us to reach many hundreds of people.