

Water Framework Directive Delivery - Project Record

River Habitat Improvement: Above Moor Hatches, West Amesbury, 2013

Scheme completed	Yes
Lead partner	Wessex Chalk Streams Project / Wiltshire Wildlife Trust
Other partners	Piscatorial Society, EA, NE, SADAC

Objectives of the project

The project's aims were to undo the effects of detrimental physical alteration in the past, such as dredging and channelization; sediment issues; and loss of habitat for fish and plants. These aims were tackled through the following objectives:

Drought proofing rivers

Mitigating climate change (hydrology, temperature) by reinstating natural processes of erosion and deposition and planting trees for shade and as a future source of natural woody debris.

Reducing the amount of sediment within the channel

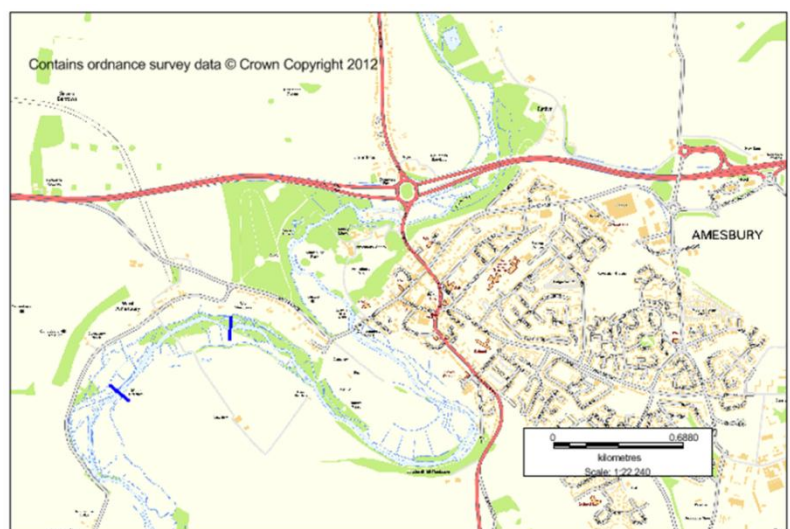
By promoting scour of the river bed through increasing flow velocity and by installing brushwood structures to act as sediment traps, the project will improve the site for salmonid spawning as well as helping to maintain the signature 'gin clear' waters of a chalk stream.

Create habitat for fish, plants

The structures installed in this project are aimed to provide habitat for a variety of plants, fish, invertebrates, birds and mammals, either through the introduction of food in the form of woody debris and leaf matter, or the provision of spawning habitat and cover.

Location

The project reach is located on the Upper Avon to the west of the town of Amesbury. The project reach is approximately 700m in length and runs from a small footbridge, known as Allenbury Bridge (SU 144 413), downstream to Moor Hatches (SU 138 409). The fishing rights along this reach are divided between the Salisbury & District Angling Club (SADAC) and Piscatorial Society. The SADAC has fishing rights on both banks from Allenbury Bridge to half-way down the reach, and rights on the true left hand bank to the downstream end of the reach. The Piscatorial Society has fishing rights on the true right hand bank from the middle of the reach to the downstream end.



Photos



Photos from a vantage point at the downstream end of the site looking upstream before (left) and after completion of the project (right). Introduction of gravels clearly had a dramatic effect on flow (both more sinuous and much less laminar)

Project breakdown (estimates)

	Planned	Actual
EA cash contributions (£) (via CRF)	80,000	60,000
EA in kind contributions (£)	0	0
Partnership cash contributions (£)	-	-
Partnership in kind contributions (£)	10,000	15,000
Total costs (£)	90,000	75,000
Delivery Time Scale	2012-2013	2012-2015

Meters of river restored, by installing:	750	400
Solid berms		6
Soft berms (brushwood mattresses)		3
Gravel riffles		2
LWD / CWD structures (including hinging trees)		2
Bank regrading		2
Other		
Number of trees planted	0	0
Ha of habitat created (wetlands, woodlands)	0	1
Metres of fencing installed		200
Number of diffuse agricultural infrastructure installed	0	0

Delivery outcomes and issues

Benefits of the project are still being assessed; however, improvements in flow velocity and variability as well as changes in floodplain vegetation indicate successful outcomes.

Archaeological considerations and heavy rainfall/flooding both caused considerable delay and a change in the scope of this project. Due to the proximity of the Stonehenge World Heritage site, English Heritage was not happy with the original restoration plan, so the project was delayed to re-plan. During this time the area received record rainfall, leading to flooding which prevented work from being undertaken.

Once new plans were agreed and the reach was accessible again, one of the partner fishing clubs pulled out of the project, thereby reducing the scope of the restoration.

Lessons learnt include allowing more time for delivery and planning for unforeseen circumstances such as unseasonal flooding.

Outstanding tasks

It only remains to set the final heights for the inlet structures for the flood relief channel. This will be completed in March 2015

Benefit Monitoring

The project site is being monitored by the Piscatorial Society. Monitoring involves invertebrate sampling, electro-fish survey and fixed point photography.

Contact details

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