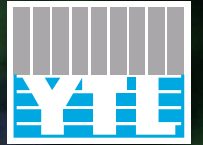


# WILD WORKING AT WESSEX WATER

21 years of  
green action

Wessex Water  
YTL GROUP



[wessexwater.co.uk](http://wessexwater.co.uk)

FOR YOU. FOR LIFE.



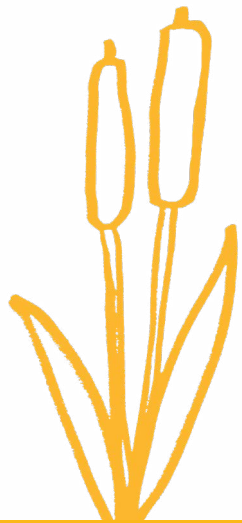
# 21 YEARS OF GREEN ACTION

This may be the Year of Green Action, but for us it marks 21 years since we became the first water company to publish a biodiversity action plan (BAP).

The plan focuses our efforts on the goal of conserving and enhancing wildlife across our region.

Our BAP sets out our aims to:

- minimise our impacts on wildlife and the natural environment from the delivery of our water and sewerage services
- work to halt or reverse biodiversity loss where it occurs on company land or because of company activities
- contribute to efforts to maintain and restore ecosystem services across the region
- support regional and national initiatives and projects to conserve and enhance wildlife.



Having a plan is all well and good, but what have we done to help wildlife across our region?

Since 1998, we've been busy delivering on projects to achieve these aims, concentrating on four areas of work:

- managing our land for wildlife
- ensuring impacts on the environment from our operational activities and development are minimised
- supporting external biodiversity partnerships and projects through our Partners Programme
- working in river catchments to boost wildlife and improve water quality.

Read on to find out more about what we've achieved over the past 21 years and a glimpse into our wild future.



# MANAGING OUR LAND FOR WILDLIFE AND CONSERVATION

We own or lease nearly 3,000 hectares of land, much of which is taken up by our treatment works and pumping stations.

It also contains some natural jewels, such as the woods and grassland around our Somerset reservoirs, chalk grassland on our sites around Salisbury Plain and internationally important heathland in Dorset.

## Managing the best

This includes more than 290 hectares of land which is nationally protected as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI), which means it's among the most important areas for wildlife in the country.

It's important to ensure we are managing these sites correctly so we can maintain their special features.

We're proud to say that our management over the last two decades means that 99.5% of our SSSI land is now in favourable or recovering condition.

## Without forgetting the rest

### But what about the rest of our sites?

We're making sure that we manage as much of our land as possible for wildlife, so we set ourselves the goal of assessing 100% of our landholding for biodiversity by 2020 with a view to bringing as many Priority Habitats (which represent some of the best habitats for wildlife) as possible into appropriate management.

By the end of March 2019, we have:

- assessed 95% of over 2,150 ha of eligible land
- mapped more than 2000ha of terrestrial habitats
- 60 Site Environment Plans in place, detailing the management needed on these sites to maintain or improve habitats, protect species or other important environmental features.

This work is in addition to the information that our

ecologists have built up over the years - we record all our visits to our operational sites and now have a database of more than 2,400 surveys comprising 85,723 records of species.

We provide updates of these records to the six environmental records centres (ERCs) across our region to make sure our information is accessible to the wider wildlife community.

We've been long-term supporters of the ERCs in Somerset, Wiltshire, Hampshire, Dorset, the former Avon area and southern Gloucestershire. The centres act as a central recording hub for species information collected by local volunteers and are the best source of information on the location of important wildlife.

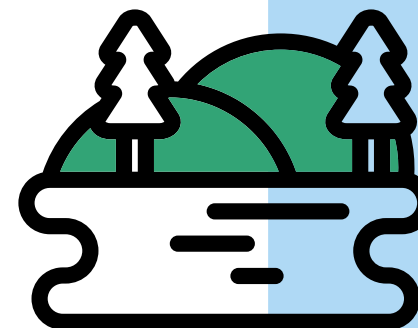
## Conservation over the years

Our more recent work has been built on a firm foundation provided by years of active conservation management.

- Between 2010 and 2015, we gathered huge amounts of information on our best wildlife sites as part of our Birds, Bats & Bees investigation.

From reservoirs to treatment works, the selected sites were subject to intensive surveys for birds, bats and invertebrates. The data has been used to inform not only how we manage the sites, but also to allow us to create new signage and downloadable site guides to help visitors understand that they are not just there to store or treat water.

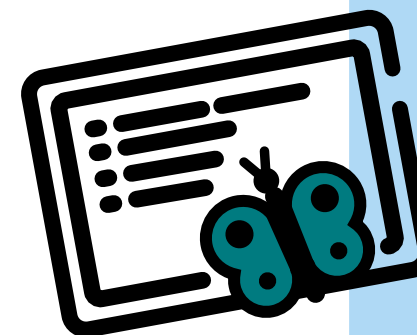
- At Tucking Mill water treatment works south of Bath, our grassland alone supports 401 invertebrate species, of which more than 7% are species of key conservation importance. This is a remarkable number for an area of less than 1.5 ha. In addition, nine bat species use the adjacent woodland and lake.



**95% of over 2,150 ha of eligible land assessed**

**More than 2000ha of terrestrial habitats mapped**

**60 Site Environment Plans**



**a database of more than 2,400 surveys comprising 85,723 records of species**

- At Otterhead Lakes in Somerset, seven bat species mingle with 61 bird species (including a small but thriving marsh tit population) among the former gardens of a demolished stately home.
- At Sutton Bingham and Clatworthy reservoirs, the information helped us to produce new visitor guides and interpretation boards to help visitors understand the value of these sites for wildlife.
- At several of the project sites, improvements such as fencing, the purchase of specialist machinery and the provision of better access for habitat management, and management through agri-environment schemes, has been implemented.
- We've actively managed and created spaces for nature in and around our treatment works, reservoirs and pumping stations for decades. One of the best examples of our long-term management are the features created during construction of a

new water recycling centre (WRC) at Weston-super-Mare.

- The WRC was created in the late 1990s to improve the treatment of sewage from Weston-super-Mare and meet tighter standards for water discharges to the sensitive Severn Estuary and its bathing waters
- Alongside construction of the WRC, we created large areas of new habitat, including:
  - 19 hectares of saltmarsh and tidal creek habitat to the north of the WRC, which involved building new sea defence walls and breaching the old walls to let the sea in at high tides
  - excavation of former fields to create new wildfowl lagoons, open water and reedbeds
  - providing grassland and other habitats around the site to support other bird, plant and invertebrate species.

- We've been managing these features ever since and watched them develop into superb habitats. The network of drainage ditches (known as rhynes) are home to one of the few remaining populations of water voles on the North Somerset Levels while other habitats across the site support otters, brown hares and saltmarsh plants, ground beetles, specialist spiders and butterflies.

Several species of ducks and other wildfowl have established themselves in the specially created wildfowl lagoons, coupled with skylarks among the grassland, waders feeding in the saltmarsh and reed bunting and Cetti's warbler in the reeds.

- In 2014/15, we revamped many of the features, created two new bird hides and renamed the area as our Bleadon Levels Nature Reserve. Most recently we have improved the paths and accessibility around the reserve to improve access opportunities for a wider section of the community.

Pyramidal orchid



Bee orchid



Marsh fritillary



# DRIVING CAR

From 2015 we further developed our conservation, access and recreation (CAR) work across the company through a dedicated fund for CAR projects. By the end of the 2019 financial year, we've worked on 53 projects, ranging from:

- supporting work to reintroduce beaver in the River Otter catchment at Otterhead Lakes in Somerset
- an assessment of all known bat roosts across our treatment works and other sites
- managing trees and woodlands on several publicly accessible sites to keep them in good condition and ensure public safety
- commissioning an archaeological geophysical survey to better understand the layers of history on our land at Sutton Poyntz, near Weymouth
- improving our publicly accessible sites for visitors - including holding bat walks, open days, rebuilding or upgrading paths and access and introducing new guides and signage.

Bringing together our conservation work with improvements to access and recreation means our sites are increasingly popular with visitors, who can enjoy the health and wellbeing benefits that being in the natural environment brings.

If you would like to know more about how we manage our land, you can read our annually updated Conservation, Access and Recreation report which is available at [wessexwater.co.uk](http://wessexwater.co.uk).

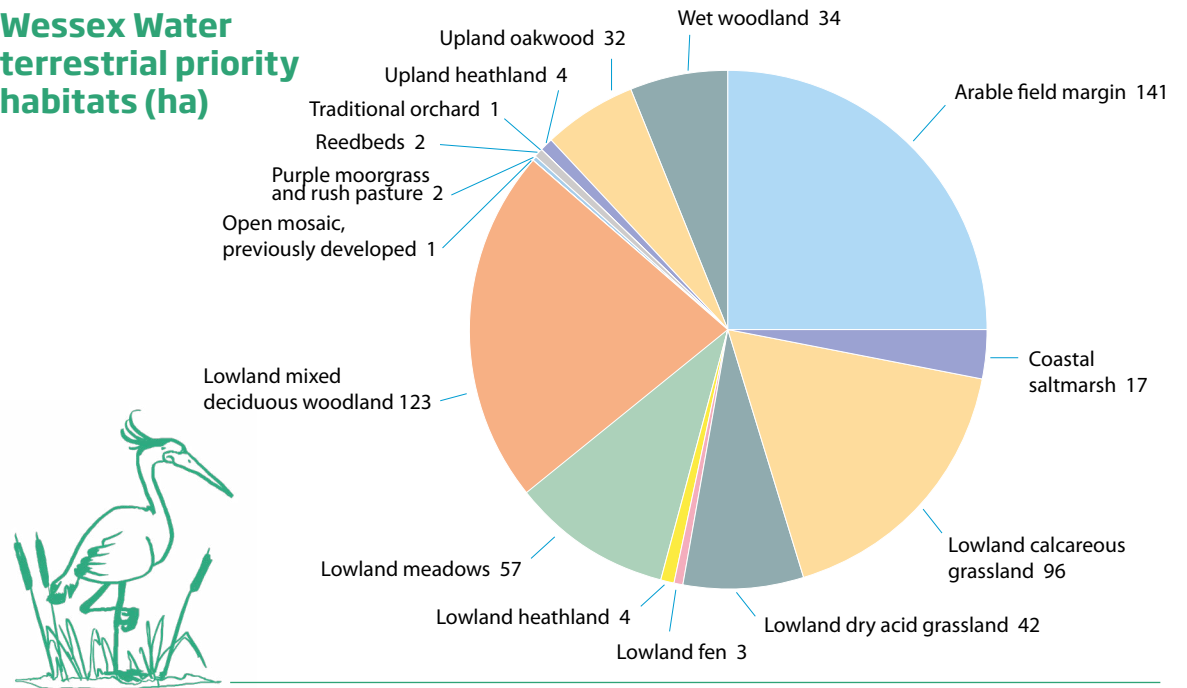


## Our new campaign promotes getting out and about to enjoy and protect our natural green spaces

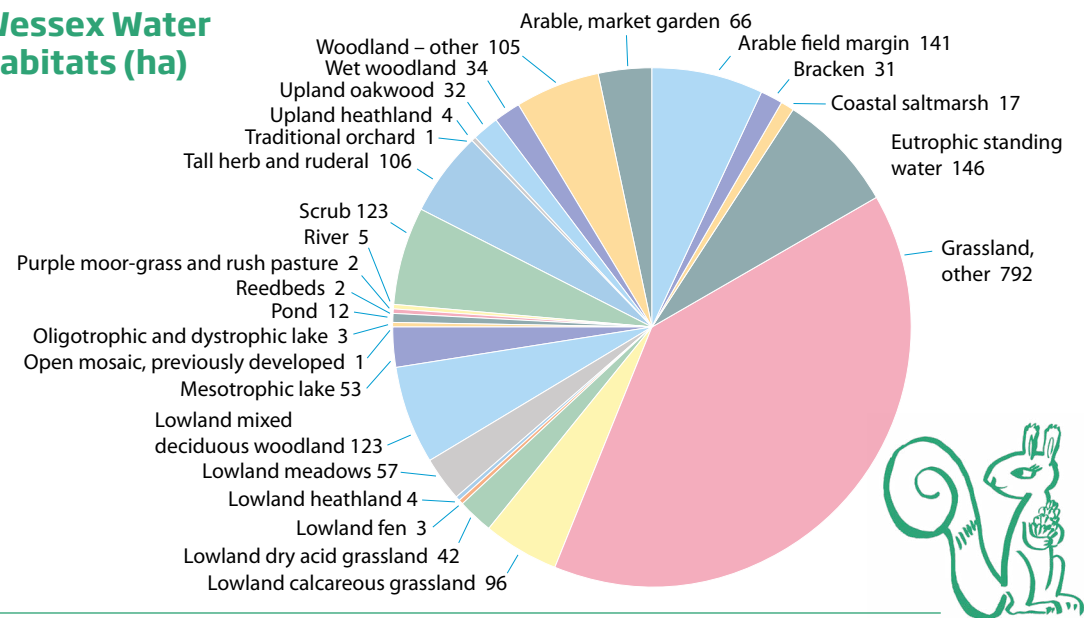
We're improving and promoting access to our natural environment for all our customers to support health and wellbeing. By working in partnership with local organisations we aim to protect the natural beauty and biodiversity of our region.



## Wessex Water terrestrial priority habitats (ha)



## Wessex Water habitats (ha)



CASE STUDY

# CLATWORTHY RESERVOIR

Clatworthy reservoir has always been one of our key sites for wildlife.

Nestled in the hills on the edge of Exmoor, our land around the waters of the reservoir contains a range of habitats including acid grassland, broadleaf woodlands and scrub leading to marshy areas around the inlet streams.

In turn, these support a wide range of species with important butterfly, bat and woodland bird populations.

Over the last two decades, we have:

- completed in-depth monitoring of the species on site which has shown that 1,004 invertebrate species are present in the grassland and that it is

regionally important for breeding woodland bird species (including song thrush, willow warbler, marsh tit, common redstart, spotted flycatcher and pied flycatcher) and supports eight species of bat

- introduced new ways of managing our grasslands within the operational constraints of the site to retain key butterfly species, including the small pearl-bordered fritillary
- successfully restored a population of greater broomrape, which had not previously been recorded in Somerset for 18 years. We collected seed from this population to deposit at the Millennium Seed Bank at Kew Gardens to conserve the genes of this rare plant

- managed woodland on the Iron Age Clatworthy Hillfort to keep it safe for future generations as part of wider conservation management of the ancient woodland around the reservoir
- eradicated rhododendron and cherry laurel from the site
- introduced a nest box scheme which has secured the first breeding record of the red-listed pied flycatcher at the reservoir. In both 2017 and 2018 there were seven successful breeding pairs
- improved access and interpretation for visitors to ensure as many people as possible can enjoy the site and understand its wildlife interest.

Photo: Russel Harris



Pied Flycatcher



Dormouse

Small Pearl Bordered Fritillary



Foxglove



Greater broomrape

Iron age hillfort



The nest box project

If you would like to know more about how we minimise impacts from our operations and development, you can read our annually updated [Conservation, Access and Recreation](#) report.

# MINIMISING IMPACTS FROM OUR ACTIVITIES

One of the most important strands of our BAP is making sure that we are not harming the environment when we carry out work across our region.

From new pipelines to new or extended treatment works, our environmental services team has the task of checking the potential impact each new project could have on the environment and then taking the steps to avoid or mitigate any affects while ensuring the necessary permissions are in place.

## Checking our work

We've been busy over the years and have invested hundreds of millions of pounds on thousands of schemes to improve our water supply and sewage treatment infrastructure. As part of this we have:

- completed 7,821 environmental screening and management reports which identify potential environmental impacts and the necessary mitigation or consents for schemes since late 2000
- carried out 2,166 ecological surveys on schemes since 2009 to date. Our ecologists walk pipeline routes or check sites to make sure any effects on species, habitats, hedgerows and trees are understood and managed before construction works begin.

Carrying out such detailed work across a huge number of schemes takes co-ordination and needs support from all areas of the business, so the team have been accredited to ISO14001 (Environmental Management System) since 2009

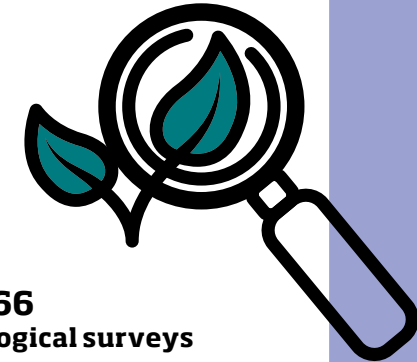
Freya - the newt detecting dog

## Four-legged support

Last year also marked another first for us, as we became the first utility company in the UK to have an in-house great crested newt detection dog, owned and trained by a member of our ecological team, Nikki Glover.

Three-year-old springer spaniel Freya has been trained to sniff out the nocturnal amphibians, with UK and European legislation making it an offence to damage or destroy their environment without a licence from Natural England.

She has gone on to become a valuable member of the team, helping us to avoid harming this rare species, for which our region is a stronghold.



**2,166**  
ecological surveys



**7,821**  
environmental  
screening and  
management reports

## CASE STUDY

# THE GRID

Our new water supply grid was a £230 million project to enable us to meet demand for water over the next 25 years without the need to develop new resources. This eight-year project started in 2010 and was completed safely, on time and within budget in March 2018.

It involved the construction of more than 200km of new trunk mains, 24 new or refurbished pumping stations and 12 new storage tanks in some of the most environmentally sensitive parts of Somerset, Wiltshire and Dorset.

As the pipeline was put through such a sensitive area, the team did an environmental impact assessment to gain planning consent for the scheme. We wanted to make sure we didn't simply avoid harming wildlife or habitats, but tried to enhance the areas and communities we were affecting.

We used some innovative and sustainable techniques to provide environmental and social benefits, including:

- partnering with the South Wiltshire Farmland Conservation Project over four years to incorporate features such as planting field margin seed mixes for birds and invertebrates in fields through which the pipeline passed. For example, during 2015, the collaboration resulted in 14 new barn owl and 12 kestrel boxes, hedge planting, new farmland bird habitat and the restoration of three silted up and overgrown ponds in a hotspot for great crested newts
- providing a series of Grid Community Awards which donated more than £30,000 to community and wildlife projects in the areas through which the pipeline ran.

These techniques were very successful and the scheme was commended by environmental organisations, including Cranborne Chase Area of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB), who praised us for the way the pipeline had been laid through the sensitive landscape of Cranborne Chase while protecting the local wildlife and environment.

The team also won an International Green Apple award for the built environment and architectural heritage.

Volunteer installing nest box

Barn owl chicks



Restored dew pond



If you would like to know more about how we minimise impacts from our operations and development, you can read our annually updated [Conservation, Access and Recreation](#) report.



# SUPPORTING WILDLIFE THROUGH OUR PARTNERS PROGRAMME

Our award-winning Partners Programme works with external conservation organisations to conserve and enhance biodiversity within our region, but outside our own landholding and operations.

It aims to complement our other strands of environmental work.

## Phasing our support

We have now funded five phases of the Partners Programme, working with a wide range of conservation organisations across our region and supporting improvements to habitats ranging from rivers and wetlands to heaths and forests. We have funded 60 projects worth a total (by the end of this financial year) of more than £1.5 million. Among the success stories are:

- the delivery of 14km of chalk stream restoration, 29.5 hectares of wet woodland planted, 58 farm visits resulting in 32 hectares of improved habitats and 45km of river assessed for future enhancement by the Dorset Wild Rivers Project (Dorset Wildlife Trust, 2010-2015)
- the increase of the Wiltshire population of tree sparrows to 280 breeding pairs, confirming the first breeding tree sparrow in Dorset for 11 years and more than 750 volunteer hours under the Wessex Tree Sparrow Recovery Project (RSPB, 2006-2010)
- supporting 19 Higher Level Stewardship and 23 Entry Level Stewardship applications covering 1,700 and 1,800 hectares respectively of the Avon Valley in Hampshire through the Avon Valley and New Forest Conservation Advice Project (Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust, 2006-2010)

- the creation of 12 demonstration sites to show how water resources could be conserved and recycled on farms, 135 farm visits to provide specialist advice, 2.4km of bankside fencing, 20 farm water management plans, natural flood management measures and support for the Somerset Flood Action plan delivered by the Resource Protection & Farm Water Management in the Parrett Catchment project (Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group South West, 2006-2015)
- more than 1,000 hectares of habitat created for declining farmland birds, 55 Environmental Stewardship applications made by farmers covering over 10,000 hectares of land and 147 farms provided with one to one conservation advice through the South Wiltshire Farmland Bird project (Cranborne Chase AONB team and South West Farmland Bird Initiative, 2010-2015).

The success of the South Wiltshire Farmland Bird project was recognised by the National Association for Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty when the project won the Bowland Award for “the best project, practice or outstanding contribution to the wellbeing of Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty” in 2015. We are continuing to fund an offshoot of this project (the Cranborne Chase Farmland Conservation project), which has supported the creation of four farm clusters in South Wiltshire, to create landscape-scale conservation of soil, water and wildlife.

In 2010, we were very pleased that the progress with the Partners Programme up to that point was recognised by a Green Apple Award, presented by the Green Organisation.

## Major or minor?

Our funding continues to the present day, with four major projects receiving our support up to 2020, including:

- Dorset Wild Rivers Project (Dorset Wildlife Trust)
- Wessex Chalk Stream Project (Wiltshire Wildlife Trust)
- South Wiltshire Farmland Conservation Project (Cranborne Chase AONB)
- North Somerset Levels Grazing Marsh Project (Avon Wildlife Trust).

We are always looking for new ways to keep the Partners Programme relevant and meet the needs of the conservation sector, so in 2015 we introduced a new range of small grants, with £5,000 available every six months. We have now provided funding of almost £40,000 between 12 small projects, including:

- Sherston River improvement project (SHRIMP) - Bristol Avon Rivers Trust
- Bring back the Buttercup - South Gloucestershire Biodiversity Action Group
- Dorset Extended Riverfly Monitoring Initiative - Dorset Extended Riverfly Monitoring Group
- River Nadder Invasive Non-Native Species Control project - Wiltshire Wildlife Trust
- Blackwater and Brown hairstreaks project - Somerset Wildlife Trust

**60 projects funded,  
worth a total of  
more than  
£1.5 million**



## CASE STUDY

# WESSEX CHALK STREAM PROJECT

The Wessex Chalk Streams project (WCSP) focuses on river enhancements and management of the River Avon in Wiltshire and Hampshire, one of the finest chalk streams in Western Europe. We have been a founding partner of the project since its creation in 1999 and have provided funding ever since, alongside Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, the Environment Agency and Natural England.

The project is successfully restoring whole sections of the river to a more natural state for the benefit of wildlife and people. Working with volunteers and specialist contractors, the WCSP has improved habitat for birds, fish, invertebrates and freshwater mammals, through a number of large and small-scale projects.

During the period 2002-2006, the project facilitated 26 river habitat enhancement projects and visited more than 100 landowners to advise on

management of the river to benefit nature conservation and biodiversity interests. Building on this success, during the 2006-2010 period an additional 39 river enhancement schemes were undertaken, combined with working with more than 160 landowners or managers to provide advice.

The following period (2010-2015) saw a further 11 river restoration projects completed, resulting in 7.5km of chalk streams renaturalised and an additional 75 advisory visits made. Work continues and since 2015 a further nine restoration projects totalling 4.1km have been completed - including working on 3.5km of river projects in 2018-19 and planning for a further 3.7km of improvements in 2019-20.

We think the project is an outstanding example of what can be achieved when we work in partnership.

*Wiltshire Wildlife Trust are delighted to celebrate 20 years of the Wessex Chalk Streams Project. Consistent core and project funding from Wessex Water has been fundamental to the success of the Project from the very beginning. This funding stimulated the provision of matched funding from Project partners enabling a sustainable project, and project Team to develop the vision of the Wessex Chalk Streams Project and implement multiple beneficial activities, actions and enhancements within the River Avon catchment. The long term partnership has developed and matured such that we are genuinely able to say that we add value to the delivery of each other's core aims and objectives for the water environment, and in particular a better future for the River Avon.*

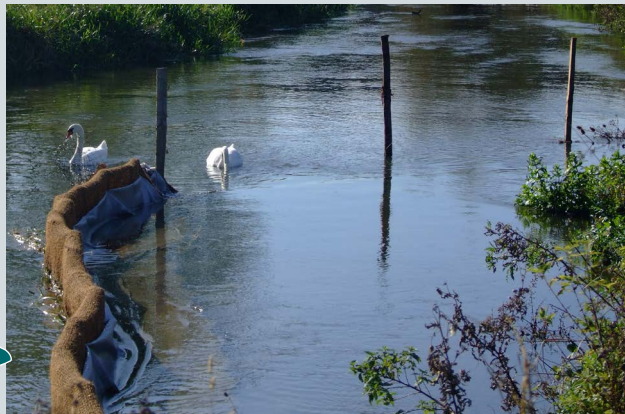
*We are also keen to thank our dedicated volunteers who have been magnificent in assisting our teams with boots in the water no matter what the challenges thrown our way. Farmers, landowners and angling clubs have volunteered their land for projects and been hugely supportive, all combining to create a network of restored stretches of river which are now starting to form kilometres of continuously restored river. This has been an exemplar of private sector, and voluntary sector engagement and partnership*

**Stephen Davis**

Head of Conservation, Wiltshire Wildlife Trust



River restoration works along the River Avon

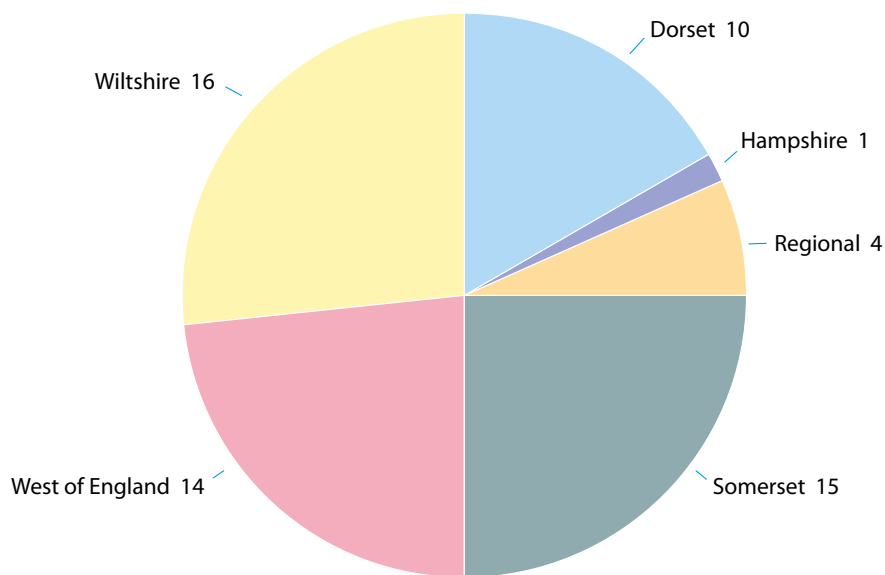


You can find out more about many of the projects through our website - [wessexwater.co.uk/environment/biodiversity-action-plan/bap-partners](https://wessexwater.co.uk/environment/biodiversity-action-plan/bap-partners).

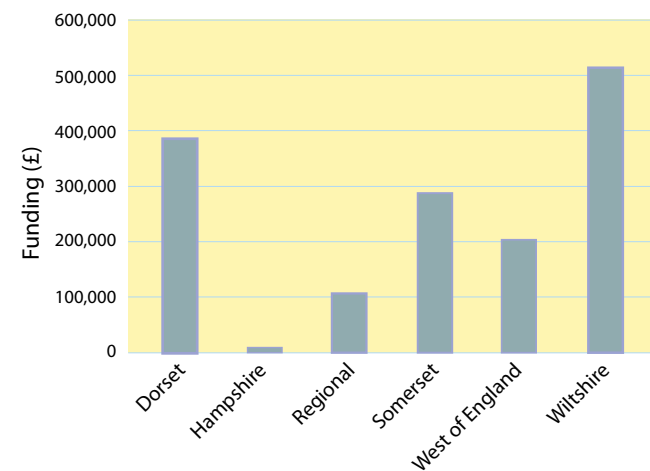
The following tables show the number of Partners Programme projects and funding, split across region and counties.

County	Projects funded						Approximate funding provided (up to 2020) (£)
	1998-2002	2002-2006	2006-2010	2010-2015	2015-2020	Total	
Dorset	3	1	1	1	4	10	398,500
Hampshire			1			1	20,000
Somerset	7	2	2	2	2	15	300,210
West of England (Avon)	7	1	2		4	14	215,950
Wiltshire	6	1	1	2	6	16	526,998
Regional	1		1	2		4	118,700
<b>Grand totals</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>16</b>	<b>60</b>	

Partners Programme projects 1998-2020 by county



Partners Programme funding 1998-2020 by county



# WORKING IN RIVER CATCHMENTS

We're committed to making a difference in the river catchments in which we operate - notably the Hampshire Avon, Bristol Avon, Dorset Stour, Poole Harbour and the Parrett and Tone in Somerset.

The quality of the water in rivers, streams and the aquifers from which we abstract water to supply to our customers faces significant challenges and the causes extend beyond the water industry.

## Pioneering catchment approach

Since 2005 our pioneering catchment management work has sought to work with landowners and other stakeholders to improve the quality of water at source around our boreholes and reservoirs, in some cases, replacing the need for us to build expensive and energy intensive water treatment processes.

From 2015 we moved up a gear to work more directly with these landowners and stakeholders to not only improve water quality, but also enhance wildlife at the same time.

Our catchment work aims to find both wildlife and water quality solutions which are cost-effective and sustainable. We do this in two ways:

- our ecologists survey and map the priority habitats (which represent some of the best places for wildlife) across the river catchments. They also work out where there are opportunities for improvements
- we provide advice, assistance and funding to landowners to make improvements for wildlife and take steps to reduce the risk of pollution to aquifers and rivers.

## Catchments and wildlife around Poole Harbour

We've worked across six catchments so far which vary in size, habitats and species.

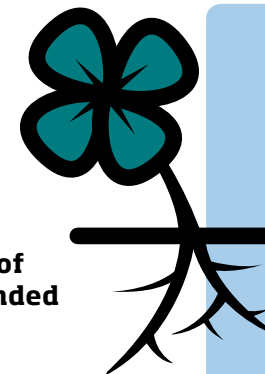
The Poole Harbour catchment is the largest at 82,000ha and has a huge range of habitats, such as lowland heath, the special chalk downs grassland, ancient woodland and coastal salt marsh. There are 240 species of principle importance to the UK in the catchment, each of which has specific habitat requirements to thrive.

Our catchment work in Poole Harbour has centred on delivering a nitrogen off-setting target to reduce the amount of nitrogen reaching the rivers from Dorchester water recycling centre by 40 tonnes a year. Instead of building additional treatment processes to deliver this reduction (which come at considerable cost to the customer and involve additional energy and chemical intensive treatment processes), we are working with farmers to reduce nitrogen from agriculture sources.

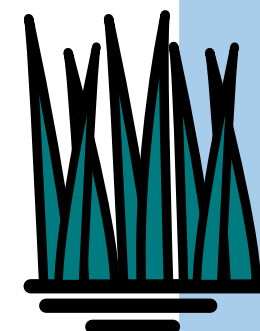
This is being delivered by funding farmers to grow about 960 hectares of cover crops (which lock up nitrogen in the soil and reduce soil erosion getting into rivers over winter) and changing more than 150 hectares of land from arable crops (which use large amounts of fertiliser which can run off into rivers) into no-input grassland, which uses no fertilisers.

More than 1,800 hectares of the catchment has been mapped to see which areas could offer biodiversity opportunities, alongside nitrogen off-setting, based on the principles of encouraging bigger, better and more joined up wildlife habitats.

about  
**960 hectares of cover crops funded**



more than **150 hectares of land changed from arable crops into no-input grassland**



**1,800 hectares of the catchment mapped**



At least 72 hectares of these improvements will be delivered by direct funding from us to provide reduced nutrients to rivers and improved habitat in the future. These enhanced habitats will also boost the support for key species, making their populations more sustainable and resilient to change by connecting habitats and allowing them to move more easily through the landscape.

## Spreading to Somerset

In Somerset, our work focuses on reducing pesticides entering the feeder streams forming the catchments around our large reservoirs. These catchments vary in

size from 1,046 hectares to 3,050 hectares and we focused on arable land due to the potentially increased risk of pesticides from this type of land use.

Our surveys found that between 13 - 25% of these catchments comprise priority habitats and we have mapped around 250 hectares of land for potential habitat improvement opportunities. We have also been working with farmers to install more than 14km of buffer strips in the catchments. These buffer strips also reduce phosphorus and sediments, which can cause other problems in the reservoirs and rivers and link up habitats to improve local biodiversity.



Catchment	Catchment Size (hectares)	No. of Priority Habitats in catchment	% land in catchment which is priority habitat	Arable area of catchment (% in arable)	Number of species of principle importance (Section 41, NERC Act)	Arable area of catchment surveyed and mapped for opportunity mapping (hectares)
Poole Harbour	82000 (48500 in targeted nitrogen off-setting area)	26	19	13350 in target area (28%)	240	1800
Sutton Bingham	3030	13	24	245 (8%)	81	25
Durleigh	1690	15	13	700 (41%)	83	90
Ashford (including Hawkridge)	3050	14	25	772 (25%)	74	85
Luxhay and Leigh	1046	23	22	450 (43%)	81	50

## CASE STUDY

# DURLEIGH RESERVOIR WETLAND

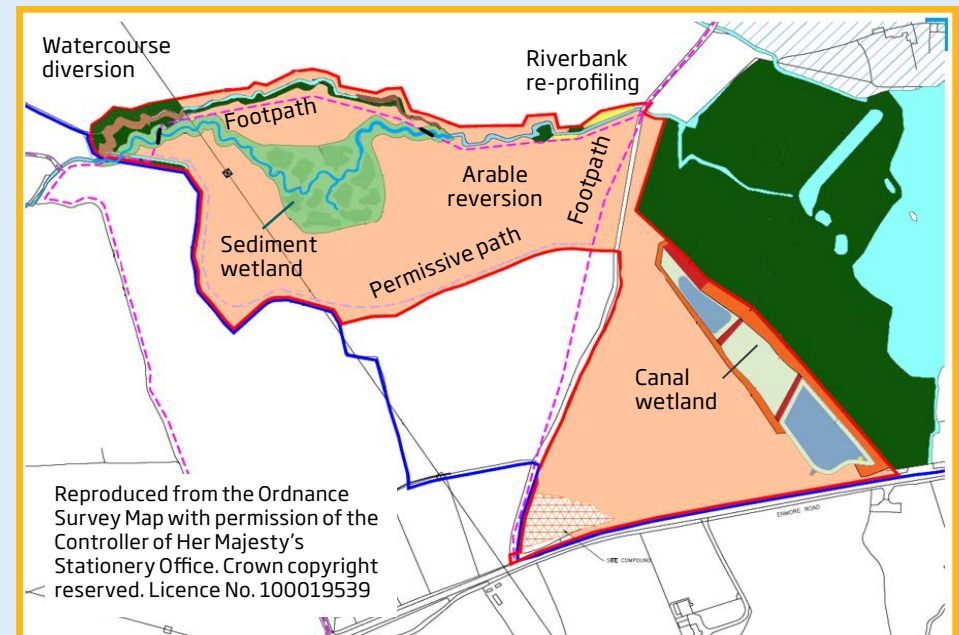
We've been investigating the potential for developing a large-scale wetland upstream of Durleigh reservoir to trap and remove heavy suspended soils in the water entering the reservoir, to prevent it silting up. The wetland design has been finalised and construction has been started. The scheme includes:

- diversion of the watercourse upstream back into its historic channel. We will also improve the river habitat by making enhancements for its fish populations, such as removal of barriers,

creation of riffle-and-pool sequences for brown trout and consolidated sediment for brook lamprey

- creation of a sediment wetland along the diverted watercourse to slow the speed of water upstream of the reservoir, allowing sediment to settle out before the water enters the reservoir
- creation of seasonal pools to capture more sediment, while also providing habitat for amphibians

- creation of a sequence of lagoons to improve the quality of canal water which is pumped into the reservoir in times of high demand. This canal wetland will also support wildlife such as dragonflies
- improvements to the biodiversity value of the area through reversion of 8 hectares of arable land to permanent species-rich grassland
- provision of enhanced public access in and around the new wetland.



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Proposals for a new wetland upstream of Durleigh reservoir will provide an environmental solution to the problem of sediment loading in the reservoir.

# MOVING FORWARD - KEEPING IT WILD

Resting on our laurels is not one of our specialities.

The challenges facing wildlife and the environment are severe and we all need to keep up our efforts to help habitats and species across our region.

So, from 2020, depending on the outcome of our business plan, we aim to be:

- providing another five years of Partners Programme funding up to 2025, continuing to work with new partners on projects which build biodiversity and create more sustainable and resilient river catchments
- further embedding our conservation, access and recreation work in our day to day management of our land and sites. We will continue to invest in specific management to boost wildlife and public access to our land
- working towards our target of no net loss of biodiversity through our engineering and construction projects
- funding investigations to continue monitoring and managing the contribution our land and sites make to wildlife. These include:
  - a project to study how our water recycling centres (sewage treatment works) can maximise opportunities for birds
  - work to understand the natural capital and biodiversity value of our non-priority habitat sites. As we have in the past looked at the value of our best and nationally protected sites, this time it is the turn for our 'normal' sites to be investigated for their wildlife potential
  - using the information from our investigations undertaken between 2015 and 2020 to identify the habitat that we could improve through better management to restore or recreate more priority habitat
- creating approximately 95 hectares of habitat through our catchment management work
- constructing four large-scale wetlands at Durlough, Cromhall, on the Somerset Levels and at Tickenham, Nailsea and Kenn Moor
- continuing to improve the Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) in our care, including supporting our agricultural tenants to achieve favourable condition on SSSIs within their tenancy
- developing our natural capital accounting capabilities
- planting trees to contribute towards a net gain to woodland in our region.



[wessexwater.co.uk](http://wessexwater.co.uk)

**Wessex Water**  
YTL GROUP



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