Issue 13 | July 2021



WESSEX RIVERS NEWS

In this issue:

GIS Mapping:

Chalk Streams: The

Crystal Clear Ebble



Chair's Introduction

George Seligman, Chair of Trustees

My optimism in the February magazine that we were almost through with lockdowns and the like proved sadly misplaced! As I write we are all coping with the summer extension of four weeks and hoping that the third wave is not going to get out of control. However, despite all this, the last fifteen months have been remarkable for Wessex Rivers Trust. Although our activities, particularly with volunteers and in education, have been curtailed by the pandemic, we have developed and are now delivering a very large range of new projects, some of which are described in this magazine. We are much busier than we have ever been before in our decade or more of existence, and thankfully we are also in a reasonable financial position. So, I am confident that Wessex Rivers Trust is well placed as we emerge from the Covid tunnel, ready to grapple with the inevitable problems that will follow Brexit and the pandemic. We live in interesting times.

Our last magazine described the start of the FReSH programme funded by Southern Water, which is part of a partnership effort to address the growing water supply challenges faced in our area. We are working on about 50 projects within FReSH to create improved habitat in rivers affected by potential abstraction in drought years by Southern Water and to remove obstructions to fish passage. The preliminary stage last year was the development of this portfolio of projects, and I am





Flowering Water crowfoot

delighted that the Main Grant Agreement for funding implementation has been signed recently with Southern Water. Looking ahead, this programme should keep Wessex Rivers Trust busy for several years.

While on the subject of droughts, the heavy rain in May and the middle of June, following on from a fairly wet winter, means that the chalk aquifer is well charged, and our rivers should not be placed under the threat of drought orders and increased abstraction in 2021. Every year brings us nearer to the planned large-scale introduction later in this decade of additional water resources (such as the new Havant Thicket reservoir and a possible desalination plant) which, we hope will reduce the pressure for abstraction.

All in all, we have every reason to be positive about the ability of Wessex Rivers Trust to make increasingly significant contributions to improving the habitat of our chalk streams as well as educating children and local communities about their importance and wellbeing. As you will read later in this magazine, we are making our contribution to addressing the 'lost year' problem in education, restarting our programme on a larger scale within the Watercress and Winterbournes programme kindly funded by the National Heritage Lottery Fund and our own programme now generously funded by The Linbury Trust.

Thank you all for your support – and please keep it coming.

Kingfisher's catch of the day

2

George Seligman



CEO's Round Up

Dave Rumble, Chief Executive



Experimenting with chalk on a Riverbank Education Session

Wessex Rivers Trust does a lot of 'soft engineering' by which I mean working with nature to restore form and function to our rivers, many of which have been hardengineered beyond recognition. The Trust's growing programme of delivery work is aimed at allowing nature to drive a more characteristic and rich ecology in our streams and rivers. In this issue we report just such an example with the next phase of the Ripley Brook project and the reconnections made between restored stream and floodplain.

But we are also in the business of another kind of soft engineering: educating and inspiring hearts and minds. It feels like we have no time to lose in responding to climate change, nature disconnectedness, water quality issues and over-abstraction, and we want to help the next generation do just that. I am delighted to report that the Linbury Trust has provided us with two years of funding for this area of work. This will transform our offer and means that we are now kitted-up to provide Covid-safe school sessions and are poised with gazebo to 'pop-up' on riverbanks across Wessex this summer. In these pages we introduce a suite of new projects on the Ebble and on the headwaters covered by the Watercress & Winterbournes scheme. A strong theme with these is our final form of soft power: knowledge, partnerships and community involvement. Enabling the local community to capture data on salmon spawning and river invertebrate numbers, for example, are the first steps to highlighting future priorities and unlocking meaningful change. Mapping barriers to fish passage and more natural river processes is brought to life on the next page, and at Figheldean on the Avon the art of the possible has been explored to look at alternatives to sending water over a weir.

The uniqueness and special plight of our chalk streams has received a great deal of high-level interest of late. The feature "Chalk Streams – the national picture" shines the much-needed spotlight onto the issues and priorities needed in and beyond our region.

I hope that this edition of *Wessex Rivers News* broadens horizons and deepens insights. It is a privilege to proudly present so much exciting work. Thank you for your support.

Dave Rumble

Contents of this issue

Chair's Introduction2	
CEO's Introduction3	
Visualising a landscape of hidden fish barriers4	
Options at Figheldean6	
A film about Salmon7	
Watercress & Winterbournes8	
Chalk Streams: the national picture10	
Ripley Brook: reducing flooding using nature11	
Crystal Clear Ebble 12	

Linbury Trust Funding......14 Photo Competition14 In Other News......15

3

Visualising a landscape of hidden fish barriers

Maddie Crabb, Trainee Project Officer



Weir removal on the River Test

4

Geographical Information Systems (GIS), now more than ever, are a key tool to inform and inspire people about our natural environment. At Wessex RT we are using data and GIS tools to help us make informed decisions about projects and streamline our workflows. You may have even seen us using ESRI's Survey123 App with volunteers on BBC Countryfile this spring to build a picture of the wildlife in the Ebble catchment. This is just one of the many ways we are utilising GIS to manage and display location-based data.

The projects team are working tirelessly on the ground, collecting a plethora of information that we electronically feed into catchment-wide datasets. An example of which is our *fish passage barriers* map displaying man-made obstacles to fish movement. Our rivers are peppered with these structures, the vast majority of which are otherwise unmapped and forgotten about. A barrier to fish passage can range from a large dam to a crumbling sluice structure. In the last year alone, we recorded an additional 97 barriers while walking our catchments. In isolation, these may not all act as barriers to migration but cumulatively they affect the ability for fish to move freely. Barriers to migration pose a wider threat to our rivers, fragmenting habitat and inhibiting natural processes. As a result, only 1% of rivers in the UK are free flowing. In the Wessex RT catchment, we currently have 788 manmade barriers mapped, that is one for every 2 km of river. This number will to continue to grow over the next few years as our coverage increases.

So why do man-made barriers cause such problems to fish even when passage is not entirely hindered?

All fish species require different habitats depending on their life stage, and therefore it is a necessity to have well connected habitats. Migratory species such as Atlantic Salmon and the European Eel are particularly vulnerable to the effects of habitat fragmentation. Subsequently, both species are in decline across the UK. Salmon and eels undertake huge migration routes between rivers and the oceans to complete their life cycles. Barriers impede this migration and increasing density and size of obstructions amplify energy expenditure and reduce the capacity of fish to finish their life cycles. For example, if a migratory salmon is returning from the Atlantic to spawn, adjacent to the Wessex RT office at Salisbury on the Hampshire Avon, the salmon would have to navigate 48 known man-made





barriers before finding the energy to mate. The Wessex RT office is only halfway up the catchment - imagine trying to reach the headwaters! One barrier may seem like an easy leap for a salmon but in combination and with external factors such as disease, climate change, and predation an apparently insignificant barrier can be one too many.

Let us also not forget the species that might not quite have such an epic migration journey. All fish species need to be able to move freely throughout rivers whether that is to forage for food, evade predators, or spawn. Coarse species often have lesser swimming capabilities compared to their athletic cousins the leaping salmonids. As a result, barriers deemed "passable" are often not due to bias towards game fish species.

At Wessex RT we are always looking to reduce habitat fragmentation and facilitate the free movement of all

GIS Fish Barrier Dashboard

aquatic species and natural processes. We use the data we collect to highlight problematic areas with high barrier density or to find key barriers that could be removed to reconnect key habitats. By creating a highresolution data set we can make informed strategic decisions at a catchment level to free up fish movement. Recent projects have seen the team completely remove five weirs as part of a single (1 km) project, bypassing a barrier to all fish migration and up opening kilometres of river for the first time in decades, by creating a rock ramp to ease migration up a valuable headwater stream.

We plan to upload an interactive dashboard of all the Wessex fish passage barriers to our website so everyone can envision just some of the challenges fish face within our catchment.



Atlantic Salmon leaping over a man-made barrier

5

Options at Figheldean

Matt Irvine, Avon and Stour Project Officer

The Trust was approached by the Environment Agency to lead on a multi-year project at Figheldean Mill on the River Avon.

The mill sits on the main River Avon at the village of Figheldean, around 8km upstream of Amesbury. Historic use for milling and water meadow management has led to the channel being realigned to the edge of the floodplain and the river is also impounded at the old mill site by the remnants of a historically much larger weir. This has led to the river becoming somewhat disconnected from the floodplain, limiting the quality of the river and its adjacent habitat. More recently the weir pool has become a very popular swimming spot, which has led to health and safety concerns over the

Options:

6

0 – Do Nothing (but manage the current conditions);

1 – Weir removal;

2 - Diversion around weir using existing (mill) bypass channel (point 2);

3 -Diversion around weir using existing bypass channel (point2) and first upstream floodplain channel (point 3);

4 - Divert main channel along upstream central floodplain channel (point 4) and restore main channel course to the centre of the floodplain;

5 - Divert main channel along upstream central floodplain channel (point 4) and infill central floodplain channel to promote reconnection to the floodplain;

6 – Split main channel flow along upstream central floodplain channel (point 4) and mill bypass (point 2); infill central floodplain channel (point 4) to fully reconnect to the floodplain;

7 - Level controlled diversion of main channel at (5) to re-join the centre of the valley bottom floor, split flows along floodplain channels and connect floodplain drainage.



weir structure and ongoing issues with anti-social behaviour.

The project aims to improve the condition of the River Avon and its floodplain, whilst reducing the unsustainable honey pot draw of the weir pool and ensuring the best possible outcomes are achieved for the river and its wildlife.

Following stakeholder engagement and extensive data collection the Trust commissioned a consultant geomorphologist to carry out an options appraisal for the site, outlining potential routes to restoration of the river and its floodplain. The seven following options were proposed for the site and shared with stakeholders:



With stakeholder feedback now complete, the next step is the creation of outline designs which will be subject to further investigation and hydraulic modelling to inform the detailed and final designs for the site, which we hope to have completed by the winter.

Left: Drone image of the site



A film about salmon...

Amy Ellis, Education and Engagement Officer



success."

During May the education team worked hard with a class of Year 5 students at Downton CE Primary School, primarily to produce a short film on salmon but also to showcase the education programme Wessex Rivers Trust offers to schools. Neck of the Woods productions filmed the whole process over three days, which finished with the children recording voiceovers for the film and telling us what they thought of the learning process.

The Project from a Child's Perspective:

"It was fun and intriguing."

"The game was my favourite, as it got the salmon lifecycle in my head."

"River dipping was great as there were millions of creatures in there. Before, I thought it was a boring old river and now I know it is an awesome habitat."

"I enjoyed the journey of learning about the different parts of a river. I didn't know about salmon and didn't know chalk makes rivers crystal clear; and now I do."

"It was interesting learning about all the obstacles that salmon face."

"We learnt about the life stages of the salmon and what threats they face, and they go back to where they were born to spawn."

"It was really fun to get to know about something you may not have got the chance to learn."

Looking for emerging Mayfly in home made aquariums

The Project from a Teacher's Perspective: "They all learnt so much. The whole project was a

"It was great to give them the opportunity to try something new and was a huge learning experience for us all."

"It was special to learn in a new way. They were given the chance to be real biologists, which gives them an opportunity to learn about jobs they could be doing in the future."

Although the project was hard work, manoeuvring around Covid-19 restrictions, bubbles and filming limitations, it was an incredibly heart-warming experience. The children were respectful of each other, insightful, enthusiastic, and joined in with all the opportunities that were offered to them. They worked well as a team to produce mayfly aquariums, acted as salmon and tried to avoid the many challenges they face on their migration during a fun and educational game, and enjoyed splashing about in the Hampshire Avon while river dipping.

Overall, the experience made an impact on us all, the young people, teachers, production team and Wessex

"I loved the chalk experiment. I even went home and showed my mum the experiment and she couldn't believe how much water chalk can hold."

Healthy rivers for wildlife and people

Rivers Trust alike.

To view the film, visit our YouTube channel; just search for "Wessex Rivers Trust" or scan the QR code here.



Watercress and Winterbournes

Moragh Stirling, Watercress and Winterbournes Projects & Conservation Officer



River Arle—The river throughout much of the project area is wide and uniform, lacking the habitat complexity that benefits water voles and juvenile fish.

Millennium Way

8

The gradual easing of lockdown restrictions has enabled a shift of focus back to the communities that are at the heart of the Watercress and Winterbournes project, a Landscape Partnership Scheme supported by the National Lottery Heritage Fund.

We have been able to deliver some excellent habitat improvements over the past year, but keeping the momentum going and building a showcase of the types of work for bringing our headwaters back to health with various restrictions in place has, at times, been difficult. Many of the planned individual projects were identified through talking to local communities and so keeping them involved has been essential. These people, after all, know their catchments the best and can pinpoint the areas that need help. Involving communities in local projects and the decision-making process also increases their appreciation of, and instils pride in, their local area motivating them to continue to take action for nature. One such project is the Millennium Way footpath on the Arle in Alresford, a headwater of the River Itchen. The footpath is popular with both residents and visitors alike, allowing anyone who uses it to enjoy a walk along the riverbank and take in the wildlife it supports. Its popularity, however, has inevitably resulted in some erosion to the path, and over the past year this pressure has understandably been greater than ever as more of us have sought solace in nature. Time spent onsite in April, engaging with those who use the Millennium Way, only made the value of this space more apparent.

Co-funded by a generous bequest which was donated for the environment and administered through the Alresford Rotary, this project will repair the path and strengthen the riverbank whilst using natural materials to maintain the existing character of the walk.

While the path is closed, we will take the opportunity to deliver improvements to the river as well: creating refuge areas for young fish and the rare White-clawed crayfish to hide from predators; and thinning some of the trees to help plants become established along the banks. Increasing the bankside vegetation will in turn support small mammals like water voles and provide the





type of habitat where dazzling dragonflies and damselflies can thrive. Characteristic native riverside plants like yellow flag iris, purple loosestrife and water mint will enrich the walk further, offering splashes of colour and scent.

This stretch of the Arle has become both straight and wide, resulting in a very uniform flow. Silt settles on the riverbed, clogging the gravel and making it less suitable for the riverflies that support the fish and birdlife. It also reduces the success of trout spawning and the survival of eggs and fry. Material created through thinning the trees will be used to increase the variety of flow in the river; they will be pinned securely to the bed to create places of refuge and areas for the silt to build up in the margins where it will become vegetated.

Although the footpath repairs will be carried out by specialist contractors, we will undertake the habitat

Education News

In March we welcomed Tracy Standish to the Trust as the scheme's Education Officer. Tracy will be engaging with the younger generations in the headwaters of the Test and Itchen, encouraging children and young people to get outside and physically experience their local water course and discover more about the wildlife it supports. Such connections will not only improve mental health and wellbeing, they will also increase the understanding of the headwaters and provide lasting memories which will hopefully ensure our rivers are respected and loved for years to come.

Invited to assist with a visit by King's Somborne Primary School to Whitchurch Silk Mill in May, Tracy has already dived into river education, guiding the children through the journey a river makes from its source to the sea. A number of props were deployed and kick samples for invertebrates taken so the children could take a closer look at the aquatic life lurking in the river Test. These proved very popular and the children's fascination at what was lying beneath the surface was clear to see!

Footpath in a poor state of repair

restoration work with the help of volunteers now that we can all carefully meet up. We will be able to continue to engage with the local community and they will get the opportunity to increase their riverine knowledge, learn new skills and have fun whilst creating a new habitat in a place shared by people and wildlife alike.









Mayfly caught whilst river dipping at Whitchurch Silk Mill

9

Chalk Streams: the national picture

Dave Rumble, CEO



River Avon

For decades now chalk streams have received national attention from various governmental and nongovernmental organisations: Biodiversity Action Plans, *The State of England's Chalk Streams* (WWF) and the Chalk Streams First initiative to name but a few. In recent months, this national interest has taken a leap forwards and upwards with the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Chalk Streams formed in 2020 and a Chalk Stream Summit hosted by Rebecca Pow MP. In May 2021, Charles Rangeley-Wilson drafted the Chalk Stream Restoration Strategy (CSRS) on behalf of the Chalk Stream Restoration Group (CSRG).

It seems that the plight of chalk streams, one of our nation's ecological treasures, has not gone unnoticed. Yet, despite the attention, many chalk streams – including those in Wessex which hosts the best examples of the nation's (and world's) chalk streams are still vulnerable and in need of urgent and farreaching action. Too many of our chalk streams and their catchments languish in a sub-optimal state for all sorts of historical and contemporary reasons including climate change. But they, as with our environment in general, are at a critical juncture: the Environment Bill, the Agriculture Bill, water companies' business planning cycle PR24, and the hotly anticipated Environmental Land Management Scheme (ELMS) are on the near horizon.

The Trust has taken a keen interest in this unfolding national picture and has responded directly to the draft CSRG consultation; many of our readers and supporters have also engaged in different ways. Though subject to change, the draft Chalk Stream Restoration Strategy is built around the 'trinity' of ecological health as shaped by water quantity (the naturalness of flow), water quality (cleanliness) and habitat quality (prevalence of natural processes). The Strategy rightly takes a broad view of the nation's chalk streams and profiles the under -performance (and under-investment) in chalk streams nationally, with a keen eye on the often forgotten and lesser-known streams.

The Trust welcomes the increased profile these unique and vulnerable rivers have, and as always are ready to help deliver through our programmes of work. But we remain cautious that the attention being lavished on chalk streams will only come to fruition if it is backed-up by effective action on all fronts - and that will involve political and public buy-in to unlock funding as well as the all-important cooperation of landowners and river managers. Watch this space!



Ripley Brook: natural flood management

Matt Irvine, Avon and Stour Project Officer

Previous work from the Trust's multi-phase natural flood management (NFM) project on the Ripley Brook has been covered in *Wessex Rivers News*. Winter and spring saw the Trust enter the fourth year of this project to reduce flooding by restoring habitats. The most recent works were undertaken in two stages.

Stage 1 works: 'Daylight' the channel

This section of the Ripley Brook (500m in length) was heavily overshaded by rhododendron, to the extent that the channel was not visible at all, even when stood on the bank. This invasive species was even beginning to take root on the opposite bank from overhanging branches. The rhododendron was cut back to 2 metres from the bank and mechanically cleared back from the bank edge. It was stored in manageable piles and moved to an agreed burn site to be disposed of. These works were undertaken in late winter to avoid the bird nesting season.

Once the channel was 'daylighted' there was evidence of a gravel bed, smothered and clogged with sediment. However, a good wash through in the next heavy rainfall event will leave the channel looking much healthier and some carefully placed large woody debris will add beneficial natural features to this previously straightened and overshaded channel.





Piped offtakes installed to create a floodplain reconnection point

Stage 2 works: Re-connecting the channel to its floodplain

The Ripley Brook is perched above its natural course through this reach resulting in hydraulic disconnection from the floodplain. The Trust identified several areas of adjacent low value forestry with the potential to become areas of wet woodland with high biodiversity value. The need to ensure continued access for forestry operations along the bank soon became apparent. Subsequently, the original plan to lower the bank at strategic locations was replaced with installation of twin wall culvert pipes set between 200mm and 400mm above average summer water levels to ensure that the channel is not depleted during low flows and the floodplain connection comes into play during rainfall events. These works were undertaken in the spring once the ground had had a chance to dry a little from the winter rains.





Channel during clearance work

Low spots identified and formalised

Crystal Clear Ebble

Alex Deacon, Catchment Partnership Manager & Matt Irvine, Avon and Stour Project Officer



Wessex Rivers Trust recently secured a contract to deliver an exciting project in the River Ebble catchment. We have teamed up with Wiltshire Wildlife Trust (WWT), Farming & Wildlife Advisory Group (FWAG) Southwest, and the Cranborne Chase AONB team to support local landowners, communities and volunteers to protect and enhance the health of the Ebble for current and future generations. The Crystal Clear Ebble project forms part of the four-year_National Lottery Heritage Funded Chase & Chalke Landscape Partnership Scheme, managed by the AONB. The scheme objectives include protection and enhancement of the natural, historic, and cultural aspects of this important landscape.

The River Ebble lies in what is locally known as the Chalke Valley, running through the villages of Berwick St John, Alvediston, Ebbesbourne Wake, Broadchalke, Bishopstone, Coombe Bissett and Odstock, before joining the Avon just south of Salisbury. Long associated with watercress farming, it has classic chalk stream characteristics, with clear water, low soft margins and plant communities dominated by water crowfoot, starwort and water moss.

Unlike many of the chalk streams found to the east, the Ebble flows through a mixed geology including gault clays and greensand bedrock, resulting in a greater variation in flow conditions. Despite its apparent beauty, like many of England's lowland rivers, it was historically heavily modified and has suffered from pollution, habitat disturbance, and changes in water quality placing it

Map of the River Ebble Catchment

under significant strain in the face of our changing climate.

Whilst much of the main River Avon and its headwater tributaries are given Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) protection, the Ebble (for unknown reasons!) is not. This has resulted in the Ebble receiving less attention than its counterparts. Subsequently, a better understanding of the current health of the river is needed to help us target action.



A straightened reach with bunded banks. This modification has created a very steep profile, resulting in limited habitat diversity.





Field run off in a ditch in the upper catchment

Our partnership project team are offering the local community and land managers in and around the Chalke Valley the chance to be trained in basic environmental survey techniques to gather information on the presence and abundance of wildlife. Survey training is focused on how to monitor the likes of water vole, salmonid redds (spawning areas), aquatic plants, river habitat, riverfly, and invasive non-native species. We are also providing advice and guidance to riparian owners on best practice river management. Subsequently, with a better understanding of the Ebble in place, and the support of the local communities, we are confident we can build a much stronger case for targeted improvements to safeguard the health of the Ebble for the future.

With the project kicking off in winter 2020/21, the Trust delivered a very well-attended online presentation during lockdown, introducing attendees to the Ebble and the aims of the project. Many volunteers are now signing -up for the survey training on offer this summer. With lockdown restrictions preventing us from delivering inperson training sessions until mid summer, we created a simple survey app for anyone who is out and about near the river to record any wildlife they spot. This will help us build up a baseline of the flora and fauna in the catchment, and with continued effort, change in these communities over time.

Winter is also the time when our salmonids (salmon and trout) spawn. Salmonid spawning surveys, more commonly known as 'redd' counting, recorded nearly 100 spawning sites between Broad Chalke and Nunton in January/February 2021. The timing of these surveys coincided with some particularly wet weather and provided the perfect opportunity for identifying areas



Following a storm, sediment contaminated river water mixes with a spring fed ditch

where sediment run-off (detrimental to aquatic life, particularly salmonid spawning sites) was an issue in the catchment. Sharing our data with project partners FWAG and Black Sheep Countryside Management ensures these sediment pollution hotspots can be addressed with local land managers and riparian owners over the coming months.



Tree-climbing otters on the Ebble. You can watch our trailcam footage on the Wessex Rivers Trust YouTube channel.

Healthy rivers for wildlife and people

Get involved:

If you're based in or near to the Ebble catchment and would like to find out how you can get involved in surveys this year, please get in contact with the team info@wessexrt.org.uk

Linbury Trust Funding

Amy Ellis, Education and Engagement Officer

When offering river education to schools and the local community, it can be hard to cover the actual costs of the whole education process. Programme development, writing risk assessments, site visits, training, resources, and promotion are all needed yet are difficult to fund. Although we ask schools for donations, the real cost to the charity is often much greater. As this fits within our charitable objectives, we are able to cover some of these costs through our unrestricted funds (such as supporter and fishing sale donations), but occasionally we are given a generous donation to cover these outgoings. This allows us to focus on the important work, delivering as many education and engagement activities as we can possibly fit into the year.

One of the trustees of Wessex Rivers Trust, Rod Parker, has worked tirelessly applying to grant making trusts with education and engagement at the top of his agenda. In March 2021 he was successful in securing £80,000 of funding (over 2 years) from The Linbury Trust. The funding is aimed at supporting our school education programme, community engagement, work experience placements and the production of nature trails throughout Wessex. We aim to use this money to expand our educational reach through new sites, and increase our capacity with sessional tutors (River Educators).

We would like to thank The Linbury Trust for their generous grant, and we look forward to offering river education sessions far and wide over the next two years.

THE LINBURY TRUST

Photo Competition

Wessex Rivers Trust invites you to enter our photo competition.

Categories:

- Rivers through the seasons
- Underwater wildlife
- Challenges rivers face

Guest judge:

14

Wildlife Photographer Dick Hawkes

Please submit entries to info@wessexrt.org.uk by 30th September 2021







In Other News...

Lee Bush, Administration Manager

Fishing Sale 2021 Update

This year's sale of fishing days was launched in late February. Supporters were emailed with details of the lots and the Trust promoted the sale on our increasingly popular social media platforms. Once again generous friends and supporters of the Trust donated days not normally accessible to the public on beautiful stretches of local rivers. After a slow start – probably still due to a certain amount of uncertainty surrounding Covid restrictions – the sale closed in April and made in excess of £5,000.

We are so grateful to those of you who kindly donated days and to the loyal supporters and friends of the Trust who bid for them. If you were lucky enough to be a successful bidder, we hope you enjoy your day! The money raised by the sale is a vital source of income for the Trust.

We will be on the hunt for more days later this year and it is never too early to start collecting them so if you are able to donate a day, please contact Lee Bush at lee@wessexrt.org.uk. Thank you.



Tracy Standish Joins the Team



Tracy joined us in March 2021 as the Watercress & Winterbournes Education Officer. Tracy has over 14 years' experience in teaching environmental education, engaging with children, young people and adults in Country Park and Nature Reserve settings and through outreach work on

countryside sites. Graduating with a BSc (Hons) in Geography, she began her career teaching outdoors with East Dorset District Council at Moors Valley Country Park before joining Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust at Blashford Lakes Nature Reserve. Tracy manages the education aspects of the National Heritage Lottery

Sarah Perrin Joins the Team

Sarah joined us in June 2021 as a River Educator. This is a new role to support the education team and increase their delivery capacity. Sarah graduated in 1996 and then worked as a fundraiser for 7 years for charities including VSO and Greenpeace. She took a career break to raise her two



boys whilst also volunteering locally. She returned to work as a Learning Support Assistant at Winnall Primary School before moving to The Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust where she has worked as an Outdoor Learning Tutor for 5 years. In this role, she has engaged with a range of audiences including preschoolers, primary school children, university students and adults., teaching and inspiring them about local wildlife. Sarah brings her passion for river conservation and enjoyment of working with children and communities to the role.

funded Watercress and Winterbournes project in the headwaters of the Test and Itchen rivers, bringing with her an enthusiasm and love for both freshwater life and the local chalk landscape.

Healthy rivers for wildlife and people



Help us protect and restore the chalk streams and rivers of Wessex. Please consider leaving a legacy for Wessex Rivers Trust in your will or becoming a supporter. Visit our website www.wessexrt.org.uk/becomeasupporter.html

info@wessexrt.org.uk Registered Charity no: 1130991 Registered Company no: 06822819

savills



Wessex Rivers Trust The Granary, Philips Lane, Stratford sub Castle. Salisbury, Wiltshire, SP1 3YR

BECOME A SUPPORTER TODAY!

This newsletter is kindly sponsored by Savills 1 Jewry Street, Winchester, SO23 8RZ William Sleeman, Director (Rural) 01962 857426, 07967 593994 WSleeman@savills.com Wessex Rivers Trust are proud to support sustainable printing using Greenhouse Graphics

Photo credit: Jack Perks