



Don Network Newsletter

Summer 2016

The **Don Network Newsletter** brings you the news of what's happening across the Don Catchment. **Got something to share?** If you have any news or features you would like to share please contact the Don Network.

Year of the fish

This year will see unprecedented investment in fish passage in the River Don. The Environment Agency recently removed a section of Beeley Wood weir to restore upstream habitat and provide fish passage. In Sheffield, the Don Catchment Rivers Trust are working on their Heritage Lottery-funded improvements for Steel Bank, Kelham Island, Lady's Bridge, Norfolk Bridge and Brightside weirs, and with Sheffield City Council on their fish pass for Sanderson's weir. In Rotherham, a fish pass is planned for Ickles weir as part of a new waste to energy plant development. At Aldwarke weir a new hydropower plant will also include a fish pass. Last but not least, Yorkshire Water are working with partners to identify fish pass options at Wharncliffe Side and Jordan's Dam on the River Don. We'll keep you updated as work progresses



Did you know?

Clause 33 of Magna Carta demanded the removal of all fish-weirs from the rivers of England. Fish-weirs then were large V-shaped structures into which fish could swim but not escape. Since weirs slowed the flow of water, they led to silting in waterways vital to London's trade. Clause 33 was intended to benefit the city of London but even today the freedom of navigation remains a hotly disputed principle and one of Magna Carta's most frequently cited clauses.

What's your favourite fish?

The brown trout was recently voted the nation's favourite fish (though probably second after the sort that comes with chips!). The humble stickleback came second. Although salmon tend to grab the headlines, brown trout will also benefit from the fish passes to be installed in the Don this year.



Shady rivers are cool rivers



Fish in Britain's rivers are under threat from warmer waters. Cold-water species such as Atlantic salmon and brown trout, struggle to cope as climate change brings significant increases in temperature. Shade can reduce temperatures in small rivers by on average 2- 3C compared to un-shaded streams; and by more on hot summer days.

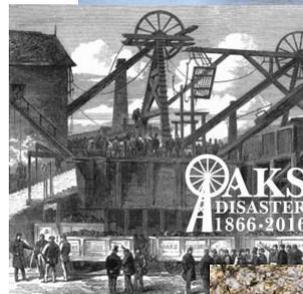
Now Keeping Rivers Cool is calling for action. The partnership is asking groups working in catchment areas to take up the challenge using a practical guide for planting along river margins, available on the Woodland Trust website. [The manual](#) gives step by step instructions for planting, species selection and location, ensuring the right balance of shade for fragile river ecosystems.

The Keeping Rivers Cool partnership can provide landowners and groups working in catchment areas with first hand specialist advice; and the Woodland Trust can also offer [generously subsidised trees.](#)

Photo WTML/Edward Parker

Dearne Valley – shaped by the past

The Dearne Valley's mining history is obvious, but the area was also a centre for glass, pottery, brick and linen, industries that sprang up because of its transport links. The industry took its toll on the area, scarring the landscape and polluting the River Dearne. The Dearne Valley Landscape Partnership is working to protect, preserve and enhance this industrial heritage, along with the valuable biodiversity, beautiful landscapes and strong communities in the area. As well as restoring manmade and natural features, the 5 year programme aims to involve and inspire the community too. Locals in the Dearne Valley are developing new skills such as invertebrate identification and reptile surveying, taking part in a wide ranging arts programme and remembering historical events such as the Oaks Disaster at Barnsley Main.



Development Manager Richard King said “We've established really strong links with groups and individuals across the Dearne Valley. We are finding it so rewarding to work with them in order to protect, preserve and enhance the rich environment and heritage of the area. In the process we are increasing people's understanding of what makes the area so special and changing perceptions.”

Conserving crucian carp



Crucian carp, stocked into Ravenfield Ponds, Kilnhurst as part of the National Crucian Conservation Project, are growing well.

The fish were raised at the

Environment Agency's Calverton fish farm and are shown here last July and this June. Crucian carp are endangered across their natural international range and the number of fisheries containing crucian carp across the UK is in the decline. The decline comes from loss of habitat and the threat to the species through hybridisation with goldfish and other carp along with competition caused by inappropriate stocking practices. Crucian carp are available from the Environment Agency for stocking into small ponds and lakes, preferably with angler access and provided no carp/goldfish varieties are present.



Photos Phoenix and Parkgate Angling Club

Volunteer Action

Volunteers have been cleaning up a section of river in Doncaster as part of the Heritage Lottery Funded project 'Living Heritage of the River Don'.

Volunteers have been doing their bit by removing rubbish, so people can enjoy walking along the paths, as well as making sure litter does not end up in the river.

Over five weeks volunteers have collected 79 bin bags full of rubbish from the section of riverside that runs between St Mary's Bridge and Power Station Road Bridge. Big thanks to local businesses who have helped with facilities and DMBC for removing the bagged rubbish from site.



There are lots of opportunities to get involved with the Living Heritage of the River Don project by becoming a volunteer. Conservation volunteers are needed to carry on the river clean-up work and help maintain the projects 'Don Valley Way Trail'. Education and Events volunteers are needed to help run school visits and community events.

Full details of volunteer opportunities can be found on dcr.org.uk, or email volunteer@dcr.org.uk if you would like to be added to the volunteer newsletter. Or contact Rachel Walker on 01302 796173 or 07825 706611.

DONe with the EU

Like everyone else we are unsure what the EU referendum result will mean for members of the Don Network and for the environment. One thing seems clear; nothing will change very quickly. Legislation like the Water Framework Directive and Habitat's Directive are enshrined in UK law and will remain in place beyond any leave date unless repealed. Protection of the water environment has a long history of cross party support and we hope this continues. Nevertheless there must be some concern, if only about the uncertainty.

The high level of EU funding we have enjoyed will end at some point but funds like LIFE remain open and may do until 2020. Existing projects are unlikely to be affected. Watch this space.

Diary date

This years' annual Don Network get together will be held on Thursday 3 November, venue to be confirmed. All welcome. If you have any suggestions on what you would like to hear about please contact Karen Housham.

If you have any news or features that you would like to include in future editions of this Newsletter please send them to donnetwork@dcr.org.uk or call Karen Housham on 07990 027703

 I'm part of the Catchment-Based Approach www.catchmentbasedapproach.org

The Don Network partnership is hosted by the Don Catchment Rivers Trust and the Environment Agency
www.dcr.org.uk/the-don-network

