



September 2016

2015/16 Project Review

I attach the Environment Agency North East Environment Programme Year in Review brochure 2015/16, that highlights some of the work we were involved in, working with our partners to improve the water environment.

2016/17 ongoing Projects

Tees Valley

Woodlands of Water – provision of a Woodlands Officer to provide targeted advice in priority catchments to landowners on applying for Woodland grants under the Countryside Stewardship scheme, with the aim of achieving new areas of woodland that contribute to reductions in diffuse pollution and flood risk. Target areas include the Bishopton Beck catchment in the north of Darlington and Stockton Boroughs and large areas of the Skerne catchment, including around Heighington in Darlington Borough.

Living Waterways – working with Tees Valley Wildlife Trust to re-meander a straightened section of Coatham Fleet and manage water levels for the enhancement of Coatham Marsh habitats.

Tees estuary habitat masterplan – working with the Tees Estuary Partnership to establish a habitat masterplan for this heavily modified estuary in order that mitigation measures can be identified and delivered through subsequent projects.

Bright Water Landscape Partnership – currently in the Development stage of a HLF project aiming to submit a Stage 2 bid in June 2017. The project will restore and enhance aspects of the natural and built environment of the Skerne catchment, potentially including areas of Darlington, involving local communities. The EA is sponsoring a river and wetland restoration project and is currently engaging with landowners to identify restoration opportunities. If successful the Delivery stage will run from 2018 to 2021.

Cocker Beck Reconnection – working with Tees Rivers Trust and Darlington Borough Council this project is seeking to re-establish a limited flow of water to the Cocker Beck in Darlington, where historical flood defence structures have over time been adapted and separated the rural catchment from the urban area.

Wider Tees catchment

Rural Diffuse Pollution reduction – working with Tees Rivers trust to deliver advice to farmers on farmyard interventions and land management along river corridors to reduce rural diffuse pollution in parts of the Leven catchment. (For information – Hambleton, N Yorks.)

Upper Tees Fish Passage – carrying out works to improve fish passage in the important spawning areas of the Clow Beck system around Aldborough St. John and Forcett.

2017/18 – 2019

Developing a Medium Term Plan of Water Environment Improvement Projects

In October 2016 the Environment Agency will begin drafting a programme of the next 3 years of Water Environment Improvement projects, updating the work done with partners in 2015 to identify priority projects in priority places. More information on how we will work with partners on this will be available around the end September/early October.

To give partners a head start and or refresh memories, we worked together in 2015 to identify some priority waterbodies (small catchments) where projects might be needed. Attached is a map and an extract of a spreadsheet that highlights the Tees Valley priority waterbodies, why they are priority, and which local authority they lie in. This priority list will likely be updated and rereleased later in 2016 during more formal consultation so please note there may be some changes.

Could partners begin to consider if they have any candidate projects in these waterbodies that may bring about improvements to the water environment.

To discuss any ideas please contact Graeme Hull, Tees Catchment Coordinator on 020302 55314 or email at graeme.hull@environment-agency.gov.uk