Partnership Update

The partnership said goodbye to our Communications and Social Media Volunteer, Georgina Kerr, who has helped tremendously to disseminate YDCP’s vision and work to the Derwent community. We also said goodbye to Matthew Cross, our Partnership Officer in April and we thank him for all his valuable work carried out across the Derwent catchment.

We welcomed Vanessa Barlow in April, who will be involved in administrative aspects of the partnership as well as implementing work on the Environment Agency’s Doing More for the Derwent project. Kate Bailey is the new YDCP Partnership Officer starting in July, having previously worked on partnership projects on the River Esk; Kate will be a great asset to the team. Finally, we are happy to announce Wild Trout Trust as a new partner, and we look forward to their addition to the partnership.

Invasive Species Control

As part of ‘Doing More for Derwent’, restoring the River Derwent SSSI, we have carried out 50.3km of Giant hogweed treatment in the catchment this season working with landowners. We have also targeted Himalayan Balsam in the upper reaches of the catchment, and isolated cases of Monkey flower, Water fern and New Zealand pigmy-weed.

We are also carrying out surveying to identify target areas for next year.

Derwent Villages

This three year Natural Flood Management project has engaged with local landowners to install 36 small dams, 5 heather bale bunds, 48 retention features and plant 94 trees and shrubs on Spaunton Estate. 14 NFM measures and willow spilling at 6 locations have been implemented at Dalby Forest with the Forestry Commission. 12 leaky dams were installed on National Trust’s Bridestones SSSI.

The next phase of the project will be carried out in Hovingham and Gilling East, North Yorkshire, where we are currently identifying key sites and meeting with landowners to discuss interventions; interested landowners please contact us at info@ydcp.org.uk.

Water Environment Grant Project

There have recently been big changes at Yorkshire Wildlife Trust’s Wheldrake Ings NNR with the replacement of the old WWII bailey bridge across the River Derwent with funding from EAFRD.

The new bridge installation, previously used on the River Thames, is vital for the access to the special lowland floodplain meadows for annual hay cutting, securing the management for many years to come.
Barmby Marsh SSSI Restoration

Wetland restoration of this Environment Agency site started last year with the removal of encroaching willow to open up the site for wetland birds, welcoming Lapwings, Gadwalls and Common snipe. Logs created from felled willow were donated to Natural England, who sold it as firewood to fund conservation work along the Lower Derwent Valley.

Since last year we have carried out water depth mapping, brushcutting to control thistles (below), and community task days. Our next phase will involve the creation of scrapes, which will help retain water on the site and create habitat to support a wide range of insects and provide feeding areas for breeding waders and chicks.

Beaver Re-introduction Trial

Two Scottish beavers were sourced for the trial at the start of April and were released into the re-introduction site, in Cropton Forest, on the 17th April. The beavers have settled well in their new home and have already started to make some changes. They have built a burrow in the river bank and a leaky dam below this to maintain the water level around the burrow. They have fixed leaks, built some impressive channels and have started to coppice trees.

On the 24th of June footage was picked up of two kits. The kits are healthy and are well developed – already exploring the area and learning fast from their parents. We look forward to watching the site change even faster with four beavers. The monitoring of the hydrological and biodiversity impacts are ongoing with all equipment installed and repeat wildlife surveys underway.

- Cath Bashford Ecologist, Yorkshire Forest District, Forestry England

Staff measured depth of existing scrapes on site

Social Media and Communications

The Partnership has recently branched out to Instagram, so if you don’t already, please follow us @Yorkshire_derwent_partnership for updates on projects and interesting things happening across the Derwent. Our CaBA website page has been updated, where you can find project information and links to documentation, such as our Catchment Management Plan.

https://catchmentbasedapproach.org/get-involved/yorkshire-derwent/