Press release: Partnership tree planting in Nottinghamshire

The green-fingered team has been spending the day planting native trees in fields near Lambley and Lowdham to support a £1million Natural Flood Management (NFM) scheme. The project aims to use a mixture of oak, alder, cherry and hawthorn trees to naturally slow the flow of surface water in times of flood, reducing the amount of water entering the Cocker Beck.

Today's activities are just part of a £15million national NFM programme which, in addition to reducing flood risk and enhancing the environment, aims to contribute to the growing evidence base for NFM as a tool to reduce flood risk.

Work on the ground started in November 2018 and will continue across 15 sites upstream of Lowdham.

Measures include constructing 'leaky' wooden barriers to help reduce the amount of water that enters the Cocker Beck. The barriers slow and store water within the existing ditch network, reducing the rate it travels to the downstream communities. They will also help to trap sediment to improve water quality downstream.

The project runs until March 2021, with partners from the Environment Agency, Trent Rivers Trust and Nottinghamshire County Council monitoring how effective the NFM features are. It is hoped it will complement a wider flood management scheme in Lowdham.

Environment Agency area flood and coastal risk manager, Paul Lockhart, said:

> We're delighted to have secured a Natural Flood Management scheme with our partners, Trent Rivers Trust and Nottinghamshire County Council. This scheme will allow us to manage flood risk using innovative solutions that are sustainable and cost-effective and, as part of the project, we will be looking at how the measures are contributing to flood risk reduction.

Notes for editors

Natural Flood Management emulates natural processes by slowing the flow of and storing water, with the aim of reducing flood flows. This can complement and also mean less reliance on the use of more traditional 'hard-engineering' at locations where communities are affected. Techniques such as tree-planting, restoring peatland, building 'leaky' wooden barriers and re-connecting rivers to natural flood plains can all be used to reduce flood risk naturally.

The villages of Lowdham and Lambley in Nottinghamshire experience flooding

from the Cocker Beck when it overtops the bank during periods of heavy rain. The surrounding catchment is steeply sloping, with run-off from fields exacerbating the issue. As well as affecting local residents, flood water can also impact upon local infrastructure, cutting off roads and access to the villages.

At selected locations, ponds and scrapes will be dug into the floodplain to increase the amount of water that can be stored there. This will also provide a habitat for wildlife, particularly invertebrates. Trees will be planted in areas to intercept run off. As they grow, they will take up some of the water, create routes down into the soil for the water to infiltrate, and provide important habitat.