

[Heavy horse helps deliver natural flood management scheme](#)

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[River Stour becomes more fish friendly](#)

This follows the successful completion of the first phase of a fish passage and habitat improvement scheme.

The project has been delivered by the Environment Agency in partnership with the Wessex Chalkstream Rivers Trust, Bryanston School and local landowners and funded through the Fisheries Improvement Programme which comes directly from national rod licence sales.

The scheme, carried out in the grounds of Bryanston School at Blandford Forum, will enable fish to bypass a large weir that previously prevented their passage upstream. Contractors adjusted disused hatches on a bypass channel to improve flows down a redundant stream. A notch was then cut in a disused cast iron weir to make it easier for fish to swim upstream. Finally, a number of woody habitat features were installed to improve habitat for fish and invertebrates.

The notch cut in the weir to aid fish passage

Although not a chalk stream, the Stour is an important river rich in wildlife that is fed by several chalk-fed tributaries. It is home to numerous species of insects, animals and fish. Otters are regularly sighted on the river.

Luke Kozak, a spokesperson for the Environment Agency. said:

We're really pleased with the outcome of this project that has

improved 300m of channel habitat and created fish passage for multiple species of fish. The improvements mean fish can bypass the 1.8m high Deer Park weir which prevents their passage upstream on the main river.

Subject to funding, the Environment Agency and its partners plan to carry out the second phase of the project next year. This will involve the reintroduction of gravel to the bypass channel to create fish spawning beds.

[Commission finds misconduct and mismanagement by trustees who lacked the skills to manage a charity](#)

A Charity Commission [inquiry](#) into a Hereford and Worcester-based charity has found a series of failures in the way the charity was run, amounting to misconduct and mismanagement. Three of the trustees have since resigned.

The [Jalalabad Association's](#) objects are to advance Islam in the areas around Hereford and Worcester.

The charity was initially entered into a [class inquiry](#) in November 2017, along with several other charities, for failing to submit their financial information, for four years. The Commission issued guidance to the charity on their financial responsibilities and directed them to submit all outstanding information.

The charity failed again to submit the required financial information to the Commission, amounting to 5 consecutive years without accounts and so, in December 2018, a [separate inquiry](#) was opened to examine wider concerns at the Jalalabad Association.

Following the opening of the inquiry and engagement with the Commission, the three founder trustees all resigned their posts. The inquiry found there were 3 further trustees, who had never been registered with the Commission, nor did they know they were trustees, despite legally holding this position.

The inquiry found that no one had taken overall responsibility for the administration of the charity, which included their safeguarding and financial arrangements.

Until 2017 the charity had been providing after school education at the mosque, however, the trustees could not show that any safeguarding measures, such as DBS checks, had been carried out or considered. This could have put the charity and its beneficiaries at risk.

In addition, the Commission found:

- three of the former trustees had been in post since the charity was founded, without ever standing for re-election
- the former trustees had not read the constitution and the charity was operating with an insufficient number of trustees.
- apart from bank statements, there was little evidence of the details of the charity's income or expenditure
- the trustees did not oversee the accounts and as a result they were late from April 2013 to April 2019
- most money was collected in cash, with no formal records kept to account for all of the charity's income

The charity did not implement guidance provided by the Commission when it was subject to a class inquiry and failed to comply with a legal direction requiring them to submit their accounts in 2017. Failure to comply with a direction is misconduct and mismanagement on the part of all of the charity's trustees.

On 13 June 2019 the Commission issued an order under section 84(2) of the Act, directing the charity's executive committee to undertake a series of actions by December 2019. This includes a direction on safeguarding, and the current trustees have already implemented a new policy, which includes the requirement for DBS checks.

Amy Spiller, Head of Investigations Team, said:

Being a charity means something and trustees, when setting up an organisation to do good work, should take their responsibilities towards their charity seriously.

Instead, our inquiry found that the founder trustees of the Jalalabad Association lacked the skills to cope with their responsibilities and the trust people placed in them. This included failing to account for the money donated to them and worryingly they operated an after-school club, without safeguarding arrangements being in place. It's therefore right that the founder trustees – those most responsible – have resigned.

The action plan we have issued to the current trustees will ensure they are held to account for introducing the significant changes now needed at the Jalalabad Association – including in the area of safeguarding. The current trustees have already made some important changes to their charity and we expect the charity to continue to learn and improve from our engagement.

The Commission requested and obtained a written undertaking from the 3

founder trustees on 12 September 2019 that they will not take on any future trustee roles for this or any other charity for a period of 10 years.

The full report is available on [GOV.UK](https://www.gov.uk).

Ends

UK leadership in European space telecommunications set to continue as new report shows benefits

A new independent report highlights the wide-ranging benefits the UK enjoys from the European Space Agency's (ESA's) Advanced Research in Telecommunications Systems (ARTES) programme, which has generated an additional £11 billion of income for the UK's growing space sector over the past decade.

ARTES is an ESA initiative that supports the research and development of innovative technology for telecommunications. The UK is Europe's leading investor in the programme and is looking forward to continuing its commitment in November during the ESA Council of Ministers meeting, Space19+ in Seville, Spain.

The report, carried out by Technopolis, reveals the positive impacts the programme has delivered for the UK, including strengthened partnerships between companies, increased visibility and reputation of UK capabilities, and the encouragement of more UK companies to get involved in the space sector.

Every £1 million won in contracts by UK industry has led to £14.4 million in additional income, as well as the creation or safeguarding of 15 high-skilled jobs.

UK Space Agency CEO Graham Turnock said:

The UK is leading the charge across Europe for commercially-focused space programmes which deliver significant value for money and develop our national capabilities.

This report shows the value of the ARTES programme to the UK, which has involved more than 200 organisations across the country and led to the establishment of ESA's facility in Harwell. We will make ambitious new investments in ESA space programmes later this year

as part of the government's wider ambitions to increase research and development spending and play a leading role in the new space age.

The vast majority of companies which contributed to the report also said the ARTES programme benefitted the UK's economy as well as end-users of telecommunications technology, both in the UK and abroad.

The benefits to society of the resultant technology are extremely wide-ranging, the report says, and include using satellite data to improve cycle routes, increasing online connectivity in hard-to-reach places and improving the monitoring of people's health with wearable devices.

Around the world, the systems produced through ARTES also provide back-up communications channels in disasters, allow farmers to track crop growth and impact upon many other areas.

The UK is a founding member of ESA, which is independent of the EU. The European Centre for Space Applications and Telecommunications (ECSAT), which opened in 2009 in Harwell, is ESA's first UK facility. It focuses on telecommunications and business applications and also supports international teams working on climate change, technology and science.

For more information, you can [read the report](#).

Innovative ecological scheme to reduce flooding in Leicestershire

Work starts this week at Narborough Bogs Nature Reserve to test natural ways of managing flood waters.

The Environment Agency have teamed up with Leicestershire and Rutland Wildlife Trust, Natural England and Heriot-Watt University to pilot innovative Natural Flood Management (NFM) measures to slow and store water at Narborough Bogs Nature Reserve in Leicestershire.

As part of the works, and in keeping with the regular woodland management on site 10 trees will be felled to create openings in the woodland canopy. The wood will be orientated across the woodland floor in a way that it blocks the flow route of flood water from the River Soar and holds it in the wet woodland area for longer. Wood piles will be used to block up old withy beds that transfer water through the woodland and a wooden bund will be created at the end of an old oxbow lake. All features have been designed to have the maximum ecological benefit and compliment the nature reserve setting.

The project is part of a £15 million national NFM programme which in addition to delivering flood risk and environmental enhancements, aims to contribute to the growing evidence base for NFM.

As these natural flood management techniques are relatively new there will also be a PhD opportunity at Heriot-Watt University to evidence the effectiveness and also to help develop guidance on how larger NFM schemes can be designed and optimised.

Narborough Bogs is one of four sites in the Leicester area where this approach is being piloted. At the other sites ponds are being created to store water and tree planting used to slow overland flows. Each site will be monitored with changes in water levels and ecology closely scrutinised to see how effective the NFM measures are.

Environment Agency Project Manager, Alex McDonald said:

This is a great opportunity to pilot natural flood management and to really understand the multiple benefits it can deliver. We've been working closely with our partners to make sure our designs marry with the ethos of the nature reserve and we hope that we will be able to show through our monitoring that we have been able to benefit the ecology of the reserve as well as reducing flood risk downstream.

Leicestershire & Rutland Wildlife Trust Conservation Officer Ben Devine said:

As a result of historic changes in hydrology and pressures from surrounding development such as roads and railway lines, Narborough Bog has dried-up significantly over the years. We are delighted to be working with the Environment Agency and others to improve the watercourse for the benefit of wetland wildlife and local communities downstream.

Natural England Freshwater Advisor Martin Banham said:

Narborough Bog Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) contains some amazing wet woodland and reed-bed. Wild, transient, boggy and rare – wet woodlands are now some of our least common wooded habitats. This project is helping the wet woodlands thrive by absorbing more water, whilst keeping the sensitive flower meadows free of fertile river mud.

Atkins Project Manager Ian Morrissey said:

We're very excited about this project as it will allow us to apply learning and innovation from previous NFM schemes to deliver

multiple benefits that align with the landowner's needs.

Heriot-Watt Associate Professor in Physical Geography, Dr Ian Pattison said:

Although becoming increasingly popular, NFM is still a fairly new approach, and we are pleased to be working with the Environment Agency and its partners on the Soar NFM project, to build up the evidence for the effectiveness of different types of NFM interventions. Furthermore, we hope to develop models which can be used to bring more strategy and design to the approach when applied at the catchment scale.