



ISSUE 1 · JAN 2023

# LOWER MERSEY NEWS



Official Newsletter of the Mersey Rivers Trust

Happy New Year! As we start a new year we take a look back at all the great work that has been delivered in the Lower Mersey catchment over the past 12 months and the exciting new projects we will be delivering in 2023.

We wish all our partners, stakeholders and volunteers a very happy and healthy 2023.

## Sefton Park Leaky Dams



The Sefton Park Leaky Dams were built by Mersey Rivers Trust staff in January 2022. Woody material was sourced from within the park, much of which had already fallen during high winds last winter. It is hoped that the dams will help to protect the footpath network from flooding and improve water quality in the brook.



Many thanks to Gino from Oasis in the Park for funding this project.



## SPEKE TO SPIKE

We are developing a 10 mile walking trail from Speke Garston Coastal Reserve to Spike Island. The trail will follow the River Mersey from the estuary, along Oglet Shore, past Hale Lighthouse, through Pickering's Pasture and under the Runcorn Bridge. There will be a series of QR codes along the trail that can be scanned to find out more information about the iconic River Mersey and the wildlife that call it home.

The Merseyside team did the 10 mile walk back in April and spotted Corn Bunting, Water Rail, Wheatear, Stonechat, Skylark, Greenfinch, Goldfinch, Whitethroat, Chiffchaff, Curlew, Lapwing, Reed Bunting, Reed Warbler, Redshank, Snipe and more!

Follow the progress on our social media with #S2S



## WELCOME ABBEY!

In January 2022 we welcomed a new member of staff to the Merseyside team. Abbey Andersen Hides is a Project Manager delivering projects and events in the Lower Mersey and Alt/Crossens catchments.

We took a trip to a very sunny Mersey estuary on her first day...



[www.merseyrivers.org](http://www.merseyrivers.org)



Mersey Rivers Trust



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## WONDERFUL WETLANDS



Back in February 2022 we planted Common Reed in the wetland at Court Hey Park, to provide habitat and help filter the water passing through. We also tidied up some fallen trees and used the material to create habitat piles on the islands.

A group of school children also visited the wetland to learn about the importance of rivers and wetlands.



Keith, Ditton Brook River Guardian

## Netherley Brook River Guardians



In 2022 we successfully trained 10 new River Guardians as a citizen science monitoring project within the Netherley Brook Catchment.

Our wonderful River Guardians carry out water quality sampling on sections of river which looks at general river health, phosphate, nitrate and ammonia testing. These tests will help us identify stable levels of chemicals in the rivers and if there are any issues we need to address. These sentinel sites will help build an overall catchment model of monitoring and help us understand the bigger picture of river health in the catchment. The monitoring spans three watercourses, Court Hey Brook, Netherley Brook and Ditton Brook which all converge and exit into the Mersey Estuary. A total of 6.41km of River is being monitored across the 9 locations.

Sampling for this project started in August 2022 and will continue for 12 months, we are excited to share the results with you all.

A huge thank you to our amazing team of River Guardians!

If you would like to get involved in future Citizen Science opportunities please email [abbeyah@merseyrivers.org](mailto:abbeyah@merseyrivers.org)



# BORSDANE LEAKY DAMS SUCCESS



Leaky dams were installed in Borsdane Wood in February 2020 to help 'slow the flow' into Borsdane Brook. 2 years later you can see how effective they have been at trapping sediment behind them, which otherwise would have ended up in the brook.



# CARBON LANDSCAPE COMPLETE



The Carbon Landscape project came to a close in 2022 but the legacy lives on. 24 projects helped to enhance 776ha of habitat and engage over 14,000 people who now have the skills and knowledge to continue to care for their local environment. You can read more about the partnership achievements [here](#).

Restoration highlights were showcased at the Carbon Landscape Celebration Event back in April.





## Mersey Rivers Week 2022

The annual Mersey Rivers Week was held in July and kicked off with a 30 mile walk and 45 mile cycle along the River Mersey, finishing at the iconic Royal Liver Building. We raised lots of money and awareness for the trust.



Day 6 was our big event of the week, a BioBlitz at Croxteth Park. This family event encouraged people to get out and explore nature. We had scavenger hunts, crafts, pond dipping and walks/talks led by our experts. It was a wonderful day and we hope to run another BioBlitz in the region next year.



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# ECOLOGY PROJECT DEVELOPMENT

## Riparian Mammals project

In 2022 there was sadly a dead otter discovered in Halewood. Although this is upsetting it does show there is potential for Rivers in South Knowsley. Mersey Rivers Trust are developing a project investigating survey techniques and methodologies in the Netherley Brook Catchment to monitor riparian mammals, specifically focusing on methods to locate Eurasian Otters and Water Voles.



## Eels project

European Eels are one of the UKs most extraordinary migratory fish species but are sadly at a critical status. The numbers of European Eels arriving across the continent has fallen by 95% in the last 40 years. An Eel pass was installed at Woolston Weir in Warrington. But what about downstream?



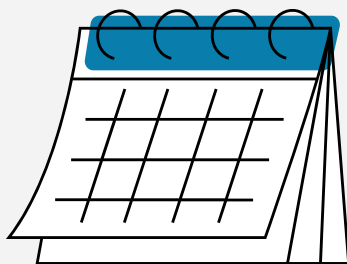
We are looking at a project to remove barriers for eel movement, develop wetland habitat which will act as eel nurseries, monitoring and engagement with the local community on this incredible species.

# KNOWSLEY FLOWER SHOW

More than 25,000 people visited Court Hey Park for the Knowsley Feelgood Festival and Flower Show weekend. We held a stall at the flower show to talk to the public about our work, including the wetland we created on site. We also took along some river invertebrates to show what lives in a healthy river.



## Key dates for 2023



2nd February

22nd March

22nd April

21st May

5th June

8th June

**3rd - 9th July**

28th July

24th September

5th December

World Wetlands Day

World Water Day

Earth Day

World Fish Migration Day

World Environment Day

World Oceans Day

**Mersey Rivers Week 2023**

World Nature Conservation Day

World Rivers Day

International Volunteer Day