

Nature Based Solutions

Sal Potts – Senior Project
Manager - Cheshire



Welcome!

- Introductions
- Housekeeping
- Agenda



Who are we?



**Alt Crossens and
Cheshire areas have
farm focusses**

- The Mersey Rivers Trust is a charity working in partnership with all those interested in improving our local rivers and waterways. It is the Rivers Trust for the River Mersey and its catchment.
- Our work covers the whole of the Mersey Basin
- We have three operational catchments, with different teams in each area,
 - Cheshire
 - Liverpool City
 - Greater Manchester

Water Friendly Farming

- Across six years and 17 projects MRT has worked to support farmers with improving the water quality on their land
- Main areas of work focus have been the Alt and Crossens catchments, the Upper Weaver and the Bollin catchment



Mersey Rivers Trust has provided:

- Free advice
- Water Management Plans
- Signpost to further funding and advice
- Small grant funding to implement capital measures
- Workshops, demo days and pie and pint events
- Attended agri shows
- Support to develop catchment farmer groups ('cluster group')
- Farming newsletters
- Online farming hub
- Weaver Gowy Agri Sub-Group

Aim to help protect and improve water quality



Key Statistics



115 water management plans written

66 farms committed to works with funded interventions



Over £230k of funding provided to farms

Outcomes

- **409m of guttering on farm buildings:** to separate clean and dirty water and reduce foul drainage runoff.
- **562m² of yard and gateway resurfacing:** to prevent erosion and reduce the risk of water pollution from surface runoff.
- **2,491 m of fencing:** to prevent livestock entering water courses, reducing erosion of banks and soil runoff.
- **Two livestock crossing points improved:** to reduce poaching and reduce the risk of water pollution from surface runoff.
- **One water trough and 2 pasture pumps installed:** to provide livestock with drinking sources alternative to the watercourse in order to reduce bank erosion and water pollution from faecal contamination.
- **One bund installed:** to prevent surface water runoff and contamination of local watercourses.
- **115 farmers engaged at Pie and Pint evenings.**



What are Nature Based Solutions?

Nature-based solutions (NbS) are actions to protect, sustainably manage, and restore ecosystems that address societal challenges effectively and adaptively, simultaneously benefiting people and nature.

Examples of Nature Based Solutions



Examples of Nature Based Solutions



Examples of Nature Based Solutions



Examples of Nature Based Solutions



What can MRT Offer?

Water Net Gain

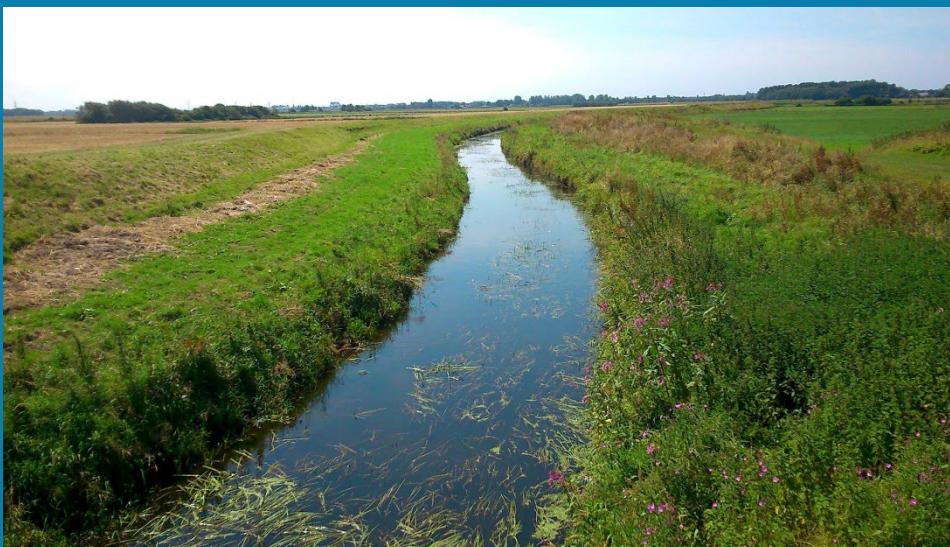
- Ponds on farms to store water for business use or release back into local waterbody
- Focus on River Dean catchment
- Completed survey phase and will be able to share findings in next few weeks
- Could result in funding for trials and then full project from United Utilities



What can MRT Offer?

Small Grant Funding and Water Management Plans

- Have applied for funds from for small grants to implement naturebased solutions on farms
- Would be £5,000 grant per farm and / or creation of a Water Management Plan
- Focussed on rainwater harvesting, tree planting, ponds, scrapes, swales, wetlands etc
- Will know outcome of this in April
- Eligible if farming/managing land within Bollin catchment



What can MRT Offer?

OCTOBER 2025



Farming Newsletter

Mersey Rivers Trust

WELCOME!

Welcome to the October 2025 edition of the Mersey Rivers Trust farming newsletter!

Read on to find out more about farming news and what's on offer this month, you can also keep up to date with our [Farming Hub](#) online.

Soil health and profit: lessons from mixed, arable and upland farms podcast

The DEFRA farming podcast have released an episode discussing how improving soil health can increase profitability on mixed, arable and upland livestock farms.

The episode explores how better soil health can reduce reliance on expensive inputs, build resilience and improve whole farm efficiency. To listen to this podcast episode, which lasts about 30 mins, click [here](#).



Catchment Sensitive Farming

Farmers interested in advice from Catchment Sensitive Farming (CSF) Officers, are encouraged to enquire for advice now, so that they are ready to submit applications when the schemes open.

CSF can offer advice on:

- Soil health
- Pesticide handling
- Natural flood management
- Reducing ammonia emissions
- Sustainable water use

For more information email csf.northwest@naturalengland.org.uk or fill in an advice enquiry form by clicking [here](#).



Defra regularly updates their [Farming Blog](#). To subscribe to the blog and ensure that you receive their latest farming updates click [here](#).

Newsletter

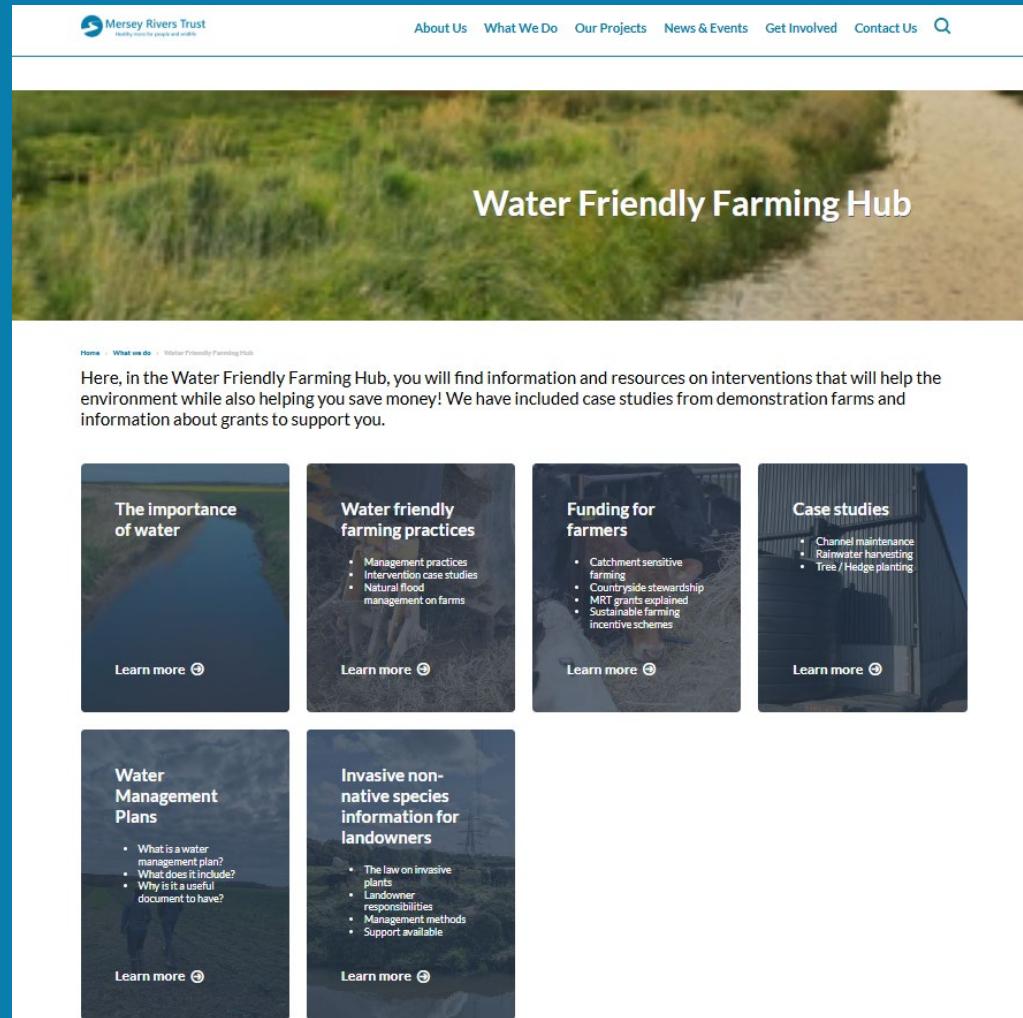
- If you sign up to our Farming Newsletter
- Gets sent out once a month
- Highlights training opportunities and local events
- Picks out items of interest and relevance from DEFRA blogs, and FAS information
- Signposts to other organisations running schemes
- Email us to sign up to the newsletter
- Also have online water friendly farming hub with

What can MRT Offer?

Farm Hub online

- Also have online Water Friendly Farming hub on Mersey Rivers Trust website
- Has case studies, events, how-to guides and information on where to go for further support

www.merseyrivers.org/what-we-do/water-friendly-farming-hub



The screenshot shows the Mersey Rivers Trust website's Water Friendly Farming Hub page. The header includes the Mersey Rivers Trust logo and a navigation menu with links to About Us, What We Do, Our Projects, News & Events, Get Involved, and Contact Us. Below the header is a large image of a grassy field. The main title 'Water Friendly Farming Hub' is displayed in white text. Below the title, a sub-headline reads: 'Here, in the Water Friendly Farming Hub, you will find information and resources on interventions that will help the environment while also helping you save money! We have included case studies from demonstration farms and information about grants to support you.' The page is organized into a grid of six cards, each with a title, a list of bullet points, and a 'Learn more' button. The cards are: 'The importance of water', 'Water friendly farming practices', 'Funding for farmers', 'Case studies' (with sub-points: Channel maintenance, Rainwater harvesting, Tree / Hedge planting), 'Water Management Plans' (with sub-points: What is a water management plan?, What does it include?, Why is it a useful document to have?), and 'Invasive non-native species information for landowners' (with sub-points: The law on invasive plants, Landowner responsibilities, Management methods, Support available).

Thank You

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