



Work being carried out at Sandybridge Dyke is an innovative project investigating whether restoration of river habitats can deliver benefits to river water quality.

Sandybridge dyke has flowed through the rise and fall of the Monkton colliery. Along the way it has been dammed by a weir and straightened to make way for industrial processes and structures. Now that Rabbit Ings has been given over to the wildlife and people of Yorkshire, the stream needs a boost to help return it to a more natural and vibrant state.

In 2013 Yorkshire Water, in partnership with the Cudworth Dyke stakeholder group, design specialists ARUP and government agencies such as the Environment Agency, undertook research along the whole length of the stream to look at the pressures acting on it and how to solve some of the associated water quality

problems. The group have since been working to address these issues.

The same year Yorkshire Water built a state of the art waste water treatment works at Cudworth to improve the water quality down stream. This year, with kind permission from the Land Trust, Barnsley Council and Groundwork Dearne Valley, we will be undertaking a stream restoration project at the Sandybridge Dyke section, here at Rabbit Ings.



BARNSELY
Metropolitan Borough Council



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“At Rabbit Ings The Land Trust and our partners Groundwork are dedicated to providing a place where people can enjoy a wide variety of our native wildlife. Therefore we are delighted to be involved in this ground breaking project and are very grateful for the massive investment that Yorkshire Water are making to improve such an important habitat.”

Ian Kendall
Estates Manager of the Land Trust

This will involve creating a new double meander in the dyke and digging out a dried reed bed, to bring faster flows and more oxygen to the waters. The new river route has been designed to take key detours, so that we don't damage the existing water vole population or the favourite roosting trees of key owl species who take up residence in the winter.

The rest of Rabbit Ings will be open for walkers to enjoy as usual.



Environmental Science in Action

The work we're carrying out at Sandybridge Dyke aims to improve the water quality in the stream and increase indicators of good water quality such as oxygen, invertebrates, plants and wildlife.

A key component of the work is also the monitoring of these indicators. For two years before and two after our habitat restoration work we have been, and will continue to, collect this information to assess the impact of habitat restoration on water quality.

If successful the results could revolutionise the way the water industry approaches meeting river water quality standards close to waste water treatment works.

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