

# Oakenshaw Weir By-pass Channel

Ribble Rivers Trust



## Date carried out

Planning took place between April 2015 - November 2016. Works on site began in the summer of 2017 - October 2017.

## Location

River Hyndburn between Clayton-le-Moors and Great Harwood, Lancashire. The area is classed as rural, but is a corridor between two significant urban areas.

## Background

The River Hyndburn has suffered from significant impacts of pollution relating to historic mining and the industrial revolution, currently it suffers from the effects of urbanisation and urban diffuse pollution. However, Ribble Rivers Trust (RRT) surveys have found regularly juvenile salmon at the foot of Oakenshaw Weir, but not above.

As part of the development of a catchment plan, it was prioritised as a barrier for a fish passage project, not only to support improved populations of fish, but also as a focal point to engage and work with the local community to bring back a flagship species to raise awareness of the value of the local riverine environment, with a view to inspiring and instigating further projects to tackle the Water Framework Directive pressures, including further physical modification, but also urban diffuse pollution.

## Partners

The Woodland Trust, Prospects Foundation, Hyndburn Borough Council, Heritage Lottery Fund, United Utilities, The Environment Agency, Accrington Rotary Club and The Windfall fund

## Themes



Water Quality



Water Quantity



Healthy Rivers



Community Engagement

*“Working with the local community and other partners we have delivered a challenging but hugely beneficial project, that is the beginning of a wider initiative. That seeks not only to bring salmon to the heart of Hyndburn, but the wider benefits of a healthy river environment and we look forward to continuing to work with the community groups and partners to achieve this.”*

- Adam Walmsley, Ribble Rivers Trust

## Outcomes

Fish are now able to migrate upstream to Rishton, and have access to significant areas of suitable habitat (including spawning habitat), which will support increased populations of fish and greater species composition. The woodland delivers



valuable habitat, connects existing parcels of woodland (creating ecological networks), but also provide shade to aid in reducing temperature rises in the river, as well as slowing the flow and reducing diffuse pollution. There has been significant involvement in the delivery of the project (including large volunteer events supported by local organisations and community groups) from inception through to fencing and tree planting, leading to significantly increased engagement and awareness within the local community of their river, and how they can help to improve it.

### Learning

The collaborative nature of this project has enabled the integration of objectives and thus the outcomes that were delivered from this project, not just on the physical environmental objectives, but the wider engagement, educational and socio-economic drivers. Through the partners we were able to overcome numerous constraints that would otherwise have prevented the project progressing. The partnership of organisations has also identified new funding streams that can be utilised to work on other sites that will provide significant river improvements.

### Next Steps

Upstream of Oakenshaw Weir is Rishton Weir, funding has been secured to deliver a fish passage scheme here in 2019. We will work with an increasing group of organisations to deliver this project, and have already commenced working on the development of another significant woodland project adjacent to this location which we have identified using our tree planting prioritisation tool as one of the highest priority locations for delivery in the Ribble Catchment.

*"In Hyndburn our rivers, woodlands and public spaces are often overlooked, yet they're fantastic! This project will make a huge difference at Oakenshaw Weir, and it will be great to see the work the schools and volunteers achieve. I'm also looking forward to the follow-on projects, and getting Salmon upstream to Accrington!"*

**- Cllr Ken Moss,**  
**Hyndburn Borough Council Portfolio Holder for**  
**Education, Leisure and Arts**

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