



# calina

THE **LIVING RIVER** NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2009



Supported by  
**The National Lottery**<sup>®</sup>  
through the Heritage Lottery Fund



**AVON**  
LIVING RIVER  
calling



Welcome to the Living River newsletter for winter 2009.

The Living River project aims to increase awareness and appreciation of the River Avon and its tributaries with a focus on how the special wildlife of the river has developed alongside the history of the area. The project will be working with local communities from the rivers' headwaters in the Wiltshire Downs to the sea at Christchurch and will involve people who live and work in the River Avon catchment in its conservation. The project, running for four years (2006–2010), will:

- Restore river habitats at sites the public can access and enjoy
- Enhance existing access to, and information about, the river
- Hold public events, training and volunteer activities to help people understand their relationship with the river system and take responsibility for it.

Supported by the Heritage Lottery Fund and:

- Natural England
- Salisbury District Council
- Salisbury International Arts Festival
- Hampshire and Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust
- Wiltshire Wildlife Trust
- Hampshire County Council
- Wessex Water
- Environment Agency



# REEDS ALL ABOUT IT...

You may have noticed something happening in the river behind Salisbury Library during October. Cain Bio-engineering Ltd have been working on our behalf to install some new edges to the river, creating a river bank for wildlife and making a beautiful green fringe along the river.

This will be planted in spring 2009 with a variety of lovely river side plants. We will be creating more

river banks in the Maltings next summer so look out for that too.

As well as the work on the river behind Salisbury Library we have worked with the library itself to brighten up the building. As part of the Salisbury International Arts Festival this year we ran workshops for families to test their photographic skills. The results of their work are on permanent display beside the river. Go see!



# FRESH SALMON



STREAM has just finished restoring the River Avon in Amesbury, revitalizing the river for Atlantic salmon, and making it a more welcoming place for the rare brook lamprey, bullhead, river plants, water voles and otters.

Changes were made to the slope, shape and width of the River Avon at Lords Walk including putting back parts of the gravel river bed, pinning tree limbs into the river to vary the flow, selective tree surgery and planting shrubs.

Salmon have already returned to part of the River Wylye as a result of last years restoration work there, and it is hoped we can build on this success at Amesbury.



# REST & PLAY

A new river-inspired bench at Stapleford allows for a moment of quiet contemplation in this great spot to enjoy the river.

Stapleford recreation ground is also the proud owner of a new dipping platform for everyone to use. The platform allows access right up to the river where you can explore the crystal clear water.



# MILL WORKERS

Figheledean villagers have been out in force to care for their local patch. The mill pond at Figheledean has a long and interesting history and was in need of a some care and attention to stop the river bank eroding too far. Over the summer the bank has been protected and some space for wildlife has been created too.



## ON THE RIGHTED TRACK



We've been working with Durrington Town Council over the last year to create a new accessible path along the river in Durrington River Park. This has now been finished and will make the area accessible all year round to pushchairs and anyone else who found the old muddy path hard going.

Interest in the park (always strong) has been revitalised too and the Durrington Conservation Group has been restarted to care for this beautiful riverside meadow and woods. They have already been busy pulling Himalayan Balsam to stop this invasive plant from spreading. If you would like to get involved contact the town council at [www.durringtontowncouncil.co.uk](http://www.durringtontowncouncil.co.uk)

## BANK TO BANK WIN

We have been continuing with the repair work to the banks on the section of river between Fisherton and Crane Street. Braving the wet summer this year has been staff from HSBC and Friends Provident in Salisbury, the 6th Salisbury Scouts, pupils from Chafyn Grove School, volunteers from the British Trust for Conservation Volunteers and Wiltshire Wildlife Trust, and young people from the John Ivie Centre. Thank you all for your help.



# RIVERSIDE FUN



Last summer STREAM and Living River ran a number of great events; highlights included:

- Family fun days at Laverstock and Blashford Lakes, including nature trails, pond dipping, model river,

making reed boats (pictured, below left) and racing Pooh sticks

- Meeting lots of families who took part in our interactive water exhibit quiz at the Hampshire Water Festival in Romsey
- An open evening on the Wylye at Chilhampton where local people

came to see our river restoration work and meet the Fishing Club.

There will be lots more events coming up in 2009 including more family fun days. For information about STREAM and forthcoming events visit [www.streamlife.org.uk](http://www.streamlife.org.uk)





draws me to the river, however, and the natural beauty of the Avon valley means that the bank side and water meadows are simply a wonderful place to be, regardless of the seasons. A day walking the banks can be a really uplifting and enjoyable experience without ever wetting a line! The river needs our appreciation, protection and care, and educating anglers about river conservation, along with the general public, and particularly young people is crucial.



**LIZ AND BILL EASEN**  
(keen walkers)  
**SALISBURY**

“One of things we really love about living in Salisbury is how quickly you can get out into the countryside and enjoy walking - we particularly like walks along the river valley and downs of the Ebbel, the views are really beautiful across the fields. We love the Avon Valley Path, what a fantastic long distance walking route this is with lots of variety, passing through farms, meadows of wild flowers, crossing old bridges, seeing New Forest ponies and glimpses of the river.”

Find out more about walking around Salisbury at [www.salisbury.gov.uk](http://www.salisbury.gov.uk) and the Avon Valley Path at [www3.hants.gov.uk](http://www3.hants.gov.uk)

“As the Education Officer for the WSRT, I have been involved in promoting the Trout in Schools Project, which has involved youngsters from 9 to 18 in rearing brown trout in the classroom, and then releasing them into the river. The hatchery tanks are then converted into mini river systems, where river plants and invertebrates can continue to be studied.

“WSRT also run an Environmental Award Scheme funded by Tesco Stores Ltd, and last year over ten thousand pounds was used to provide grants for bog gardens, ponds and water saving schemes in schools, as well as river enhancement projects in the Wessex area.”



**BARRY DEAKIN**  
**RINGWOOD CANOE CLUB**

“The river is a perfect amenity for those who enjoy placid water canoeing or kayaking. It is a safe waterway on which to introduce novices, children and families, and offers many options from an hour’s peaceful birdwatching to a full day’s voyage.

“There are also several weirs that provide great play spots for developing your skills on moving water.”



**CHARLOTTE MORETON**  
**ARTIST**

“I work with many different materials from stone and wood to metal and clay. The river always inspires me to create something new as it has so many forms and so many shapes – they are always changing.”

*Please be aware that activities such as fishing and canoeing may require the landowner’s permission*



## HEADING ACROSS THE WATER

We say goodbye to our project manager, Sarah Yarrow, this month who is heading back to New Zealand.

“I’m sad to leave but know the project is in great shape and wish everyone luck, I look forward to seeing the ‘new improved’ Avon in the future”. A new project manager will be appointed in the new year.

We also bid farewell to Martin de Retuerto who has done a fantastic job developing a management approach for invasive plants in the catchment. This work will continue in the new year with the appointment of the new Wessex Chalk Streams Project officer. We wish Martin well in his new role with Hampshire & Isle of Wight Wildlife Trust as the Project Manager for Winnall Moors.



## LIVING RIVER & YOU

Get involved or get in touch:  
Living River, 87 Crane Street,  
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Call 01722 334856  
or email [martin.gilchrist@naturalengland.org.uk](mailto:martin.gilchrist@naturalengland.org.uk)

[www.livingriver.org.uk](http://www.livingriver.org.uk)

# ASK AVON

We’ve been asking people what they like about the River Avon, Wylde, Nadder, Bourne, Ebbel, Till and Dockens Water...



**MAISIE AND DYLAN**  
(age ‘nearly 7’)  
**SALISBURY**

Maisie and Dylan live just along from the River Avon in Salisbury and the river is one of their favourite things about living in the city.

“I love to play pooh sticks when I’m out walking our dog” says Maisie “I love the ripples and reflections on the water, and watching the fish from the bridge” says Dylan.



**PETE READING**  
**WESSEX SALMON AND RIVERS TRUST**

“As a very keen angler, the attraction of the Hampshire Avon has centred around the fish that inhabit the river, and the barbel, chub, roach and salmon for which the river has always been nationally famous have been the main reason why I am so often to be found on the river banks.

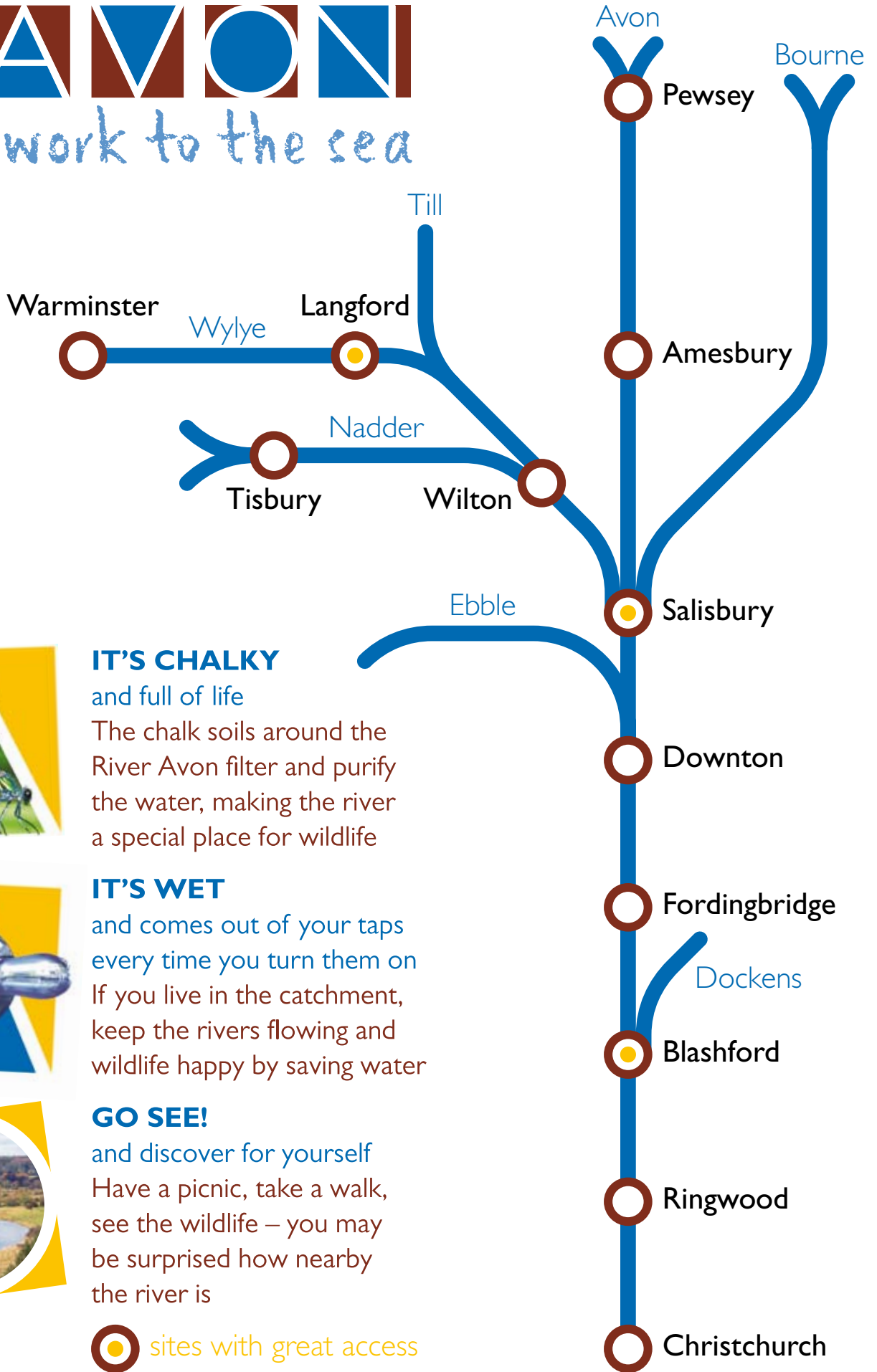
“The fishing is only one aspect that



# AVON

LIVING RIVER

## a network to the sea



### IT'S CHALKY

and full of life

The chalk soils around the River Avon filter and purify the water, making the river a special place for wildlife



### IT'S WET

and comes out of your taps every time you turn them on

If you live in the catchment, keep the rivers flowing and wildlife happy by saving water



### GO SEE!

and discover for yourself

Have a picnic, take a walk, see the wildlife – you may be surprised how nearby the river is

sites with great access