

Fixed point photography (FPP)

This factsheet provides a short introduction to the following:

1. Why use FPP
2. Getting it right
3. Using FPP as a community engagement tool

1. Why use FPP

⇒ It is an **easy to use** and **cost effective** way of documenting any type of river restoration works or on-going river processes, as well as having potential for monitoring specific changes, such as:

- Measurable physical and morphological change and development,
- Vegetation colonisation, growth and community succession,
- Bank erosion and deposition,
- Habitat development and change,
- Varying flow conditions and resulting impact.

⇒ It **visually demonstrates the benefits** of works/processes to non-technical audiences. Having a visual demonstration of a project's success can be **key in engaging communities and convincing funders** for future projects. An example is shown in Figure 1.

⇒ It **helps to flag up any issues** that might occur before, during or after the project. By visually recording change it allows you to identify and adaptively manage any problems as soon as possible. These may go unnoticed without this structured approach.

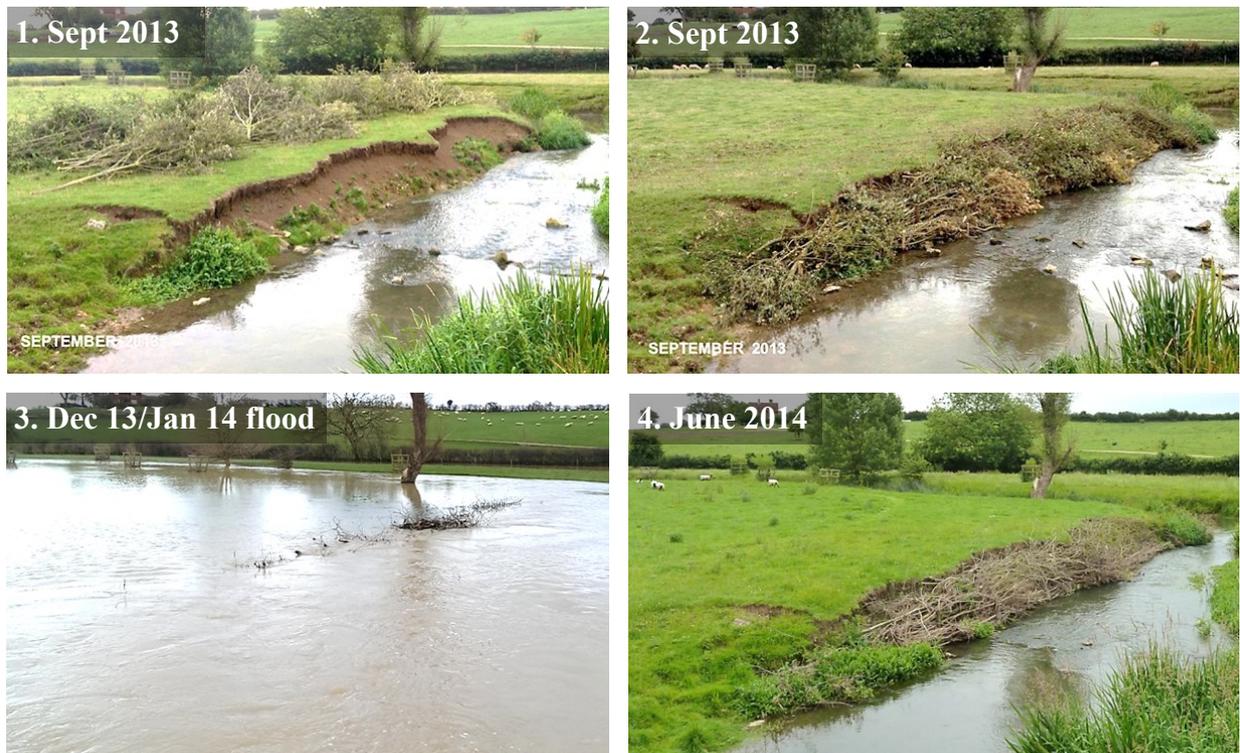


Figure 1 Example of FPP of bank erosion protection on the Great Ouse - 1. pre-work, 2. post-work, 3. in flood, 4. post-work showing no further erosion and vegetation colonisation

2. Getting it right

Setting it up

- ⇒ A good quality **digital camera** (built in GPS with additional geolocation can help).
- ⇒ A **detailed map** to record the date and location of your fixed point photos.
- ⇒ A good understanding of the **proposed works** locations to gauge initial FPP points.
- ⇒ Avoid using camera zoom, as photos become harder to replicate.

Initial pre-works visit

- ⇒ Allow time to get it right on the setup day.
- ⇒ **Take more than you need** - once the works start you cannot go back and get more pre-works shots!
- ⇒ A good approach is to take **upstream, across and downstream photos** from a fixed point, then move on to where the downstream section becomes the upstream, and repeat; this will provide initial blanket coverage (Figure 2).
- ⇒ Note down fixed locations and directions
- ⇒ Consider vegetation growth - will a small sapling obscure your FPP in 10 years?
- ⇒ Try to **frame each of the four corners** of the photo with features (e.g. a fencepost).

Return visits

- ⇒ Take your location map *and* initial photos to line up.
- ⇒ Use the **same camera** or focal length of camera.
- ⇒ Repeat *all* photos, and add any extras onto your map.
- ⇒ Capture different seasons and conditions and **record the date**.
- ⇒ **Organise your photos** to make it easy for people to access and identify them in future.

3. Using FPP as a community engagement tool

If you get volunteers involved in FPP you have not only got a set of **continuous visual results**, but you also **engage the local community** - a useful outcome if a project objective is community engagement. This can be done simply by getting a group of volunteers together to take regular photos.

A good example is the Cairngorms National Park Authority Photo Post Project where fixed point photo posts (Figure 3) are used to take a photo of the same view. Instructions on the post tell the photographer where to upload their photos. This provides a set of fixed point photos and encourages the public to engage in their local environment. Find out more [here](#).

When implemented well FPP can engage a local community and provide a sustainable, low-cost monitoring tool

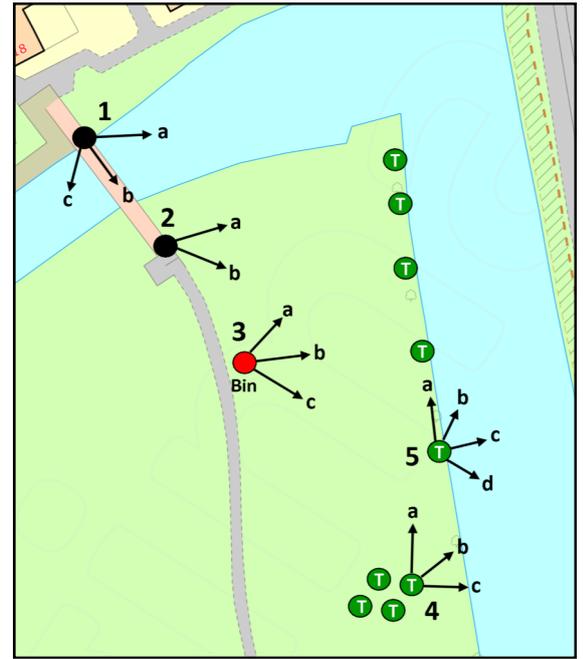


Figure 2 Example map of FPP points - mark the exact location for your FPP points on the map, including the direction.

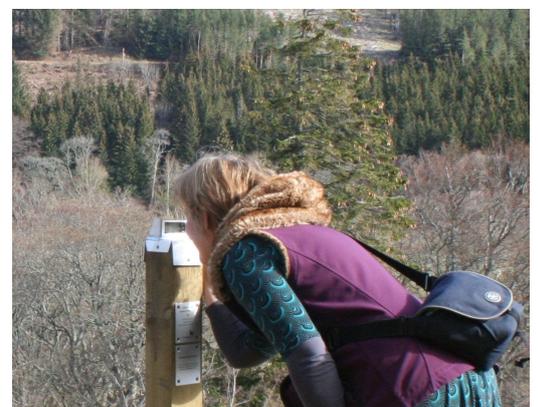


Figure 3 Photograph of the fixed point photo posts used in the Cairngorms National Park