

TAKING STOCK OF POLICY DEVELOPMENTS

This year has been a busy one so far for national-level reviews of policy and guidance. The Government's [White Paper on the natural environment](#) came hot on the heels of the findings of the [National Ecosystem Assessment](#), aiming to take up the ecosystem services approach and secure healthy ecological networks, within which river corridors are of course key components. 'The Natural Choice' also introduced [Local Nature Partnerships](#), aspirations for voluntary [biodiversity offsetting](#), and launched the competition for [Nature Improvement Areas](#). The Environment Agency are also looking to extend the [catchment pilots](#) for encouraging greater local participation (from the initial 10), while the Communities and Local Government Select Committee still grapples with a working [definition of localism](#).

National flood risk management strategies have been re-drafted, and RRC and its close partners have influenced the development of those for [England](#) and [Wales](#) and the guidance for delivering sustainable FRM in [Scotland](#), and local flood authorities' duty to contribute to sustainable development. Meanwhile, the Greater London Authority's report '[For a Rainy Day](#)' promotes river restoration for flood risk management in the capital, and calls for action to remove obstacles to RR projects. And finally... just when you thought you understood the Water Framework Directive, the European Commission's '[Blueprint to Safeguard Europe's Water](#)' appears on the horizon! The House of Lords EU Committee is [seeking views and evidence](#) to support its input to this upcoming (2012) evaluation of current European freshwater policy.

REWILDING AND WEIR REMOVAL ON THE RIVER DOVE



The RRC Members site visit provided an interesting insight into work undertaken by a local fly-fishing club interested in improving the naturalness of their part of the river. The removal of a weir has restored the natural dynamics of the flow and 're-wilding of the river' is expected to significantly improve the ecological value of the river in the long-term. See the [case study](#) online.

NEXT UP: The next RRC Members site visit which [you can register for today](#) is taking place on Wednesday 7th September demonstrating works undertaken on the Woodsmill Stream near Henfield in West Sussex. The recent project saw the creation of a new river channel through the bottom of the valley improving connectivity with its floodplain along 500m. **Only a few spaces left!**

A 60ft tree felled as part of the Dove's 're-wilding'. The photo demonstrates the extent of the vegetation development in only a few months following the works.

BIOSECURITY OF HABITAT PRODUCTS

The RRC were recently contacted by the Environment Agency's INNS Adviser, with a cautionary tale...

Crassula sp. and one or two other invasive species were found growing from pre-planted habitat enhancement products waiting to be installed in a restoration project. Given that introducing these could get you tied up with the Wildlife & Countryside Act, we wish to advise practitioners of the risks and encourage you to **take an interest in the sources of any live materials you install** in rivers. Fortunately the problem was spotted early in this case and the source could be investigated and action taken to prevent it happening again. [For advice on the subject, contact RRC.](#)

RRC SOCIAL MEDIA—NEW DEVELOPMENTS

Richard Vause, a recent graduate of the University of Edinburgh, worked on placement with the RRC recently. One of the areas he developed was the RRC's Social Media. Here's what's new!



"This month, as the newest recruit to the RRC office, I worked on a project to 'spread the RRC across the internet'. My experience at Fresh Air Student Radio in Edinburgh has given me an insight into what works to help communicate and disseminate information. I set up an official YouTube channel to showcase video content, and to encourage RRC to produce further multimedia output. RRC are also now on Twitter and this allows for quick and widespread distribution of the latest info in a timely manner. Hopefully these will ensure RRC reach the widest possible audience". **Links to these are at the bottom of the page.**

For those on LinkedIn, a group managed by RRC Board Member Claire Thirlwall, 'River Restoration Professionals', is recommended by the RRC as an active discussion forum. [View the group here.](#) Items of interest are also posted on the RRC Facebook and Twitter pages to keep up-to-date.

The River Restoration Centre is the West Region lead organisation for the [EU LIFE+ RESTORE Information and Communication project](#) (2010-2013) which encourages the communication of sustainable river restoration best practice across Europe.



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