

Salmon swimming up a weir

This project aims to reconnect people, communities and decision makers back to the River Don by enhancing and celebrating its rich natural, built and industrial heritage, changing beliefs and attitudes so that the River Don and its heritage will be better valued as a major asset to South Yorkshire and better protected into the future.

The Living Heritage of the River Don is a fantastic project that involves work in the river to encourage the once prolific salmon to return to the River Don. The project will also signpost a long-distance heritage trail from Doncaster to Sheffield and provide opportunities for people and communities to learn from the heritage that surrounds them, helping to develop new skills and interact with their heritage in new ways.

South Yorkshire owes much to the rivers that run through the area and yet we have, until recently, turned our back on them as dirty, lifeless places. Since the 1990s, water pollution has been reduced, transforming the natural heritage of the river into something that should be better valued, enjoyed and celebrated. The Don itself has a fascinating cultural history. Much of the navigation is the ‘Dutch River’, constructed by Vermuyden of the Netherlands in the 17th century, and cannons produced in foundries along its course saw action in the Napoleonic Wars, the American War of Independence, and on board Nelson’s flagship *HMS Victory*.

Fiona Spiers, Head of HLF Yorkshire and the Humber, said: “In the 18th century, apprentices in the centre of Sheffield complained that they were forced to eat salmon for lunch every day. We are delighted that, thanks to National Lottery players, we have been able to fund this project which will once more make salmon commonplace throughout the Don

catchment area, and help people better understand the natural heritage at the heart of their communities. It is wonderful to think that in five years' time we will be able to stand in the centre of Sheffield and watch these fish swimming upstream again."

Karen Eynon, Project Manager for Don Catchment Rivers Trust, said: "We're over the moon that HLF has given us this support. The rivers of the Don catchment historically provided prosperity to South Yorkshire, it's time to recognise, restore and celebrate their contribution to our heritage. We hope to capture the imagination of the people of South Yorkshire with the return of salmon to the River Don and the signposting of a long distance heritage trail along the river and canal."

Notes to editors

The Don Catchment Rivers Trust (DCRT) was established in 2008 to help protect and improve the rivers in the River Don catchment area, South Yorkshire. This includes the Rivers Don, Dearne and Rother and their tributaries. We achieved charitable status in 2010. We are committed to working with other people, community groups and organisations, securing funds to carry out environmental improvements and changing beliefs and attitudes about the rivers in the Don catchment and their heritage so that they are better valued. More information is available on the Don Catchment Rivers Trust website.

Further information

Karen Eynon, Project Manager at Don Catchment Rivers Trust, on tel:07585 448 710 or email: karen.eynon@dcrt.org.uk.



Salmon leaping up a weir

Bringing salmon back to Sheffield