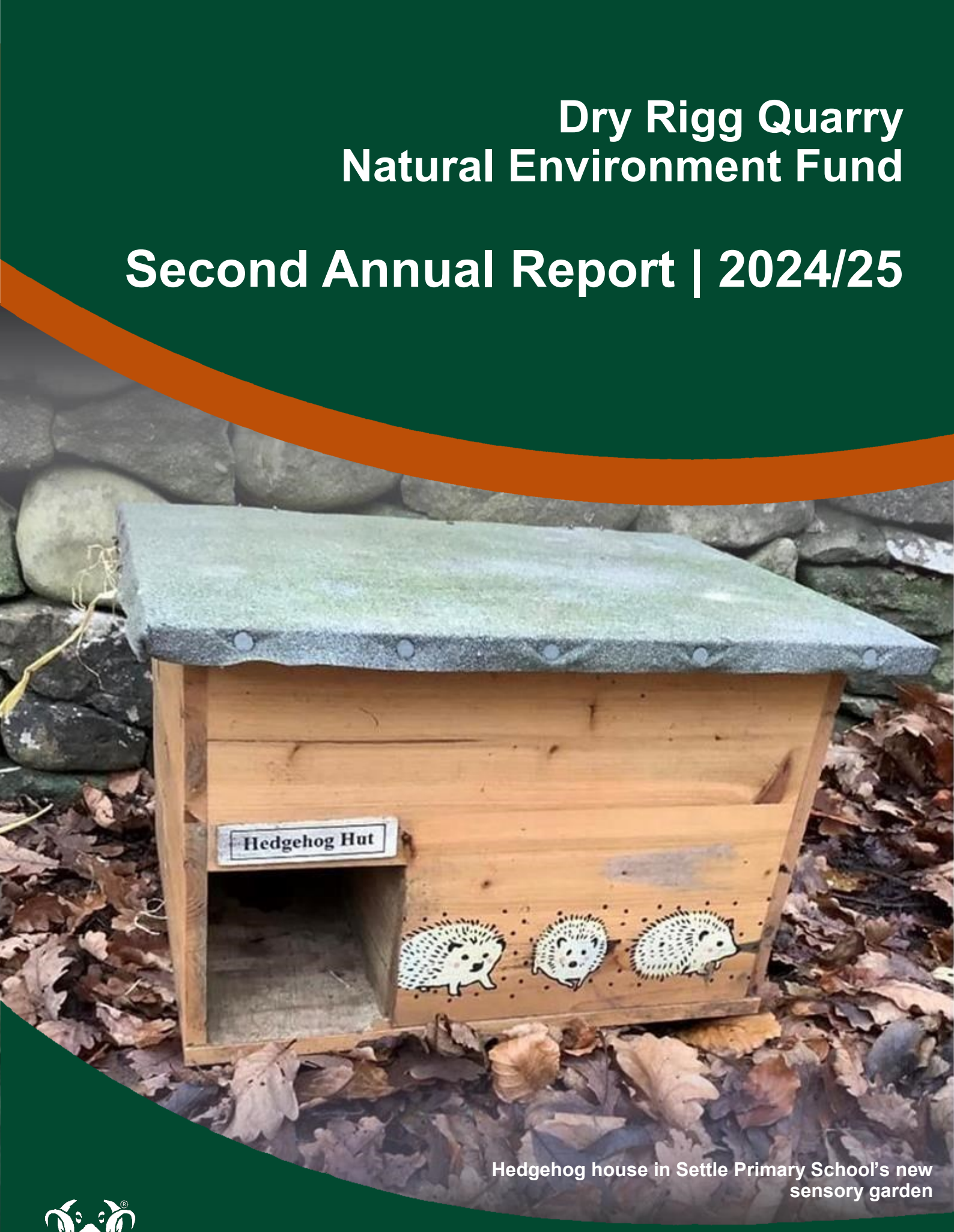
Dry Rigg Quarry Natural Environment Fund

Second Annual Report | 2024/25



Hedgehog house in Settle Primary School's new sensory garden

YORKSHIRE DALES
National Park Authority

www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/wildlife

Dry Rigg Quarry Natural Environment Fund (NEF)

Second Annual Report | 2024/25

Background

A discretionary grant fund is available from the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority for environmental projects that benefit land which falls within the parishes of Austwick, Clapham cum Newby, Stainforth, Horton-in-Ribblesdale, Malham Moor, Settle, Settle, Giggleswick, Lawkland, Halton Gill and Langcliffe and such other land as may be agreed between the Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and Tarmac from time to time.

The source of this Fund is money obtained from Tarmac due to a Section 106 Planning Agreement in connection with planning permission C/04/609B for the deepening of Dry Rigg Quarry and extension of time allowed for the winning and working of limestone until 2034 (restoration to be completed by 2035).

Under S106 Schedule 2, Environmental Contribution: "*The Developer shall pay to the Authority on an annual basis the Environmental Contribution of £35,000 (index Linked)*.

The aim of the Natural Environment Fund is to improve biodiversity and quality of the natural environment within the locality of Dry Rigg Quarry or which compensate for the actual or potential environmental impacts of the quarrying, with particular emphasis on the natural beauty of the landscape, tranquillity and air quality and riverine environment within the Locality.

It is noted that under the s106: "*within one month of the due date for payment of the Environmental Contribution by Tarmac the Authority shall provide Tarmac with annual reports setting out how monies received as part of the Environmental Contribution have been spent (or allocated) over the preceding 12 month period*".

This report has been prepared in partial fulfilment of the National Park Authority's obligations under the s106 Agreement. It covers the period 1st April 2024 to 31st March 2025.

Activity in 2024/25

Tarmac's Environmental Contributions have been used to establish a discretionary grant fund administered by YDNPA for environmental projects in 'the Locality' that must benefit from any funds received from Tarmac due to the Section 106 Planning Agreement.

The Fund has been promoted through a distribution of an A5 flyer to all eligible parishes and the existence of the discretionary grant is advertised on the Yorkshire Dales National Park website at:

https://www.yorkshiredales.org.uk/dry-rigg-quarry-nef

The grant guidelines, application form and a map of the area within the locality are available to view and download from this webpage.

The discretionary grant is administered by YDNPA's Wildlife Conservation Team. YDNPA financial delegation regulations allow for decisions concerning NEF expenditure up to £10,000 to be made by the Senior Wildlife Conservation Officer. Disbursement of funds above £10,000 require approval by the Director of Community and Conservation.

During this round of funding, the Authority dealt with 12 enquiries regarding the NEF from individuals and organisations interested in obtaining funding. Two applicants have been offered discretionary grants and all offers were accepted by the organisations that applied. A summary of the expenditure from the NEF is given in Table 1.

Photographs of the wildlife pond project at Keasden near Clapham, undertaken by S. Hull in 2023/24 are shown in Appendix 1.

The 12-Month Progress update reports from other successful applications in 2023/24 are included in Appendix 2.

A grant for £6,000 was provided to Craven Wildlife Rescue to assist with their ongoing running costs. The remainder of the grant offer, an offer in principle for £24,000 is towards the purchase price of new premises for Craven Wildlife Rescue and remains valid for one year from the date of Decision (dated Monday 13th January 2025). Decision offer will expire on 13th January 2026.

A sum of £10,000 has been earmarked for the Building Homes for Dales House Birds Project (house martins, house sparrows, starlings and swifts) a 3-year project covering the parishes of Malham, Clapham and Settle, locations that fall within the Dry Rigg Quarry NEF funding area.

Table 1 below contains details of projects funded as at 05/03/2025.

Sue Thurley (Wildlife Conservation Officer) 05/03/2025

Rachel Brindle (Wildlife Conservation Officer) 05/03/2025

Table 1: Discretionary Grants from Dry Rigg Quarry NEF as at 05/03/2025

ITEM	APPLICANT / ORGANISATION	AMOUNT
DR-2024-003 Restoration of 194m of drystone wall and 370m of top wiring for biodiversity gain	M. and R. Wilson, Gill Garth, Selside	**£6,000**
DR-2024-005 £1500 to cover the cost of outreach activities (petrol, art and craft materials, printing costs); £3000 towards costs of attending training courses (course fees, travel expenses, accommodation); £1500 for outdoor storage equipment; £24,000 earmarked in principle towards the purchase of new premises.	B. Thompson, Craven Wildlife Rescue	**£6,000** £24,000 earmarked towards new premises provided all grant offer conditions are met in full by deadline 13th January 2026
DR-2024-006 Field Trees Project, Ingleborough Estate. Contribution towards cost of replacing felled trees (costs of trees, materials and stockproof cages).	I. Worthington, Ingleborough Estate	Application at Authority internal consultation stage
DR-2024-007 Nature recovery activities in Austwick for funds to help improve biodiversity through selective preparation and sowing of traditional hay meadow and other seeds and other associated activities, building on similar work already carried out successfully in other parts of the village.	G. Cleverly Austwick Field & Local History Society (AFLHS)	Application at Authority internal consultation stage
	TOTAL EXPENDITURE	***£12,000 Plus £24,000 earmarked for Craven Wildlife Rescue, AND a further £10,000 earmarked for Building Homes for Dales House Birds***

Appendix 1- Project Photographs



'Getting the levels right': S. Hull, Wildlife Pond Project



'The digger and dump truck get to work': S. Hull, Wildlife Pond Project



'Erecting the stock fencing': S. Hull, Wildlife Pond Project



'Putting in the Bentonite': S. Hull, Wildlife Pond Project



‘First Visitor’: S. Hull, Wildlife Pond Project



‘January 2025’: S Hull, Wildlife Pond Project

Appendix 2 - Progess Update Report

Contents

- Dry Rigg Quarry Natural Environment Fund Grant Pond progress report January 2025 by Sheila Hull

- R. Jakeman Update Report

- Settle Primary School Dry Rigg Quarry Grant, Report to Yorkshire Dales National Park

- Regarding Dry Rigg Quarry Natural Environment Fund Grant given to

  Clapham Sustainability Group for the Swift Project 2024

- Ribble Rivers Trust, Dry Rigg Quarry Natural Environment Fund Report, 23rd January 2025

Dry Rigg Quarry Natural Environment Fund Grant

Pond progress report January 2025, S. Hull

I live two miles South of Clapham in an AONB, on the Northern edge of the Forest of Bowland. I have a small paddock and keep chickens. I had always planned to develop a wildlife pond, as there was an existing natural boggy area at the south end of the paddock. The aim being to encourage native natural flora and fauna and a biodiversity source whilst providing a visual focus of enjoyment and tranquility for my own pleasure and that of my neighbours.

When I became aware of the Dry Rigg grant scheme in 2023, I decided to make an application and I was delighted and excited when the application was accepted in early 2024, following a site visit by Rachel Brindle from the YDNPA Conservation and Wildlife Team, to identify the potential position of the pond.

The application costings were submitted to include work by a local contractor (All Ground Works). These costings included two days labour for two persons using a small digger and a dump truck for the excavation and soil removal. Also included in the costings were the survey/levelling equipment; Bentonite clay liner; stock fencing for the perimeter of the fence (to protect the area from the chickens and to enable the surrounding grass and vegetation to re-establish); Natural England grass seed mix and an allowance for some native hedging and to make good existing disturbed fencing and hedging.

For various reasons, mainly due to the extensive wet weather during 2024, the work did not commence until July. Luckily the planned two days were sunny and dry.

The area of approximately 4x4 meters was defined and marked out with a site level, along with the level of maximum fill and the depth. This area was excavated to remove about 30 tons of earth to form the basic pond shape. The banking around the circumference was then grading to create various levels and marginal shelves. The adjacent ditch was clay bunded to enable the pond fill and not run off into the ditch, therefore maintaining an appropriate level at all times.

We had decided to use Bentonite lining for the pond, although more expensive than most fabricated liners, it is more environmentally friendly than the use of plastic liners.
Sodium Bentonite is a natural occurring clay derived from volcanic ash and has a unique property that it expands when wet. It is renowned for its ability to seal ponds and lakes and acts as a self-healing sealant, effectively preventing water loss through seepage, making an idea natural barrier against leaks. Water leakage can undermine the pond’s ecosystem and structural integrity.

The Bentonite was delivered in 20 kg bags in granule form and was applied by a manual Blanket Method (applying a uniform layer directly onto the area to be sealed.) The native soil type is clay and this facilitated the blending of the Bentonite to produce a watertight seal.

A few large rocks and an old rotting log were stacked to create a range of depths to create hiding places, resting zones and a ramp for an exit route for creatures.
The temporary Stock fencing was erected around the pond and the surrounding area was tidied and made good and Natural England grass seed mix was scattered.

During the following few weeks I purchased and planted a few native marginals such as Yellow Flag Iris, Water Mint, Lesser Spearwort etc. and the pond was then left to fill and colonize with native species of local provenance. I was advised by Robyn Guppy (Conservation and Wildlife Officer) that The Freshwater Habitats Trust advice is not to plant up new ponds, to encourage native natural flora and fauna to develop.

I noted Dragon flies and Damselflies at the end of the summer and early autumn and evidence of native rushes and weeds emerging. I have placed some Hazel, Alder and Willow whips close by and also gorse shrubs to create hedging to attract birds and insects.
It is an on-going project to observe the surrounding area develop naturally. The current level is at its Winter maximum and native ruses, reeds and pond weed (which I need to identify) are colonising well. The pond will be monitored in Spring for any high level leakage and more Bentonite could be added by the Sprinkler method onto the surface if required. This will sink to the bottom.

The pond froze over during the cold spell early January and I can't help but wonder what variety of life is evolving and establishing homes underneath the ice.
It will be interesting to observe the dry margins in the Spring and Summer months and monitor for invertebrates, amphibians, birds and butterflies and bats.

I am pleased with my countryside "gem" and I hope it will be a focal point for all manner of wildlife.

Grateful thanks for the funding.



'The pond in September 2024': S. Hull, Wildlife Pond Project

R. Jakeman Update Report

At Foredale, the 100 trees were planted on the hillside before the end of March 2024 planting season finished. So far, all of the trees appear to be growing ok. The trees are largely positioned at the top of the slope at the moment due to the volume of scree covering the remainder. A second season of planting will take place after monitoring the successful establishment of the initial trees.

At Langcliffe, I've cleared a fair amount of the wild raspberry back which looks to have made a difference already. I have also planted a couple of semi-mature hazel and rowan trees within the patch to see how they perform. There is still quite a large area of brambles which I'm reluctant to clear during this growing season as the volume of fruit could be quite large. The active vegetation management work will continue on the nature reserve.



'Natural pioneer vegetation on the incline slope, Foredale Quarry'







‘New tree planting on the Foredale Quarry incline slope’

Settle Primary School Dry Rigg Quarry Grant

We have combined the grant money from the Dry Rigg Quarry Fund with a grant from the YDNPA SDF grant to develop a wildlife themed sensory playground for KS1 and EYFS and to develop our ‘nature nurture’ provision in school around the theme of ‘connecting with nature’ and ‘wildlife’ to support pupil wellbeing. Some of our original ideas had to be slightly adapted due to unexpected costs etc, but here is a summary of everything we achieved in the final project.

An outdoor classroom has been created by making a stone’ amphitheatre’ in the banking with additional wooden seats at the top. Green sail shelter posts have been added and we have a sail shelter roof too (although this is currently being resized as it didn’t quite fit with the posts). This will provide shelter from rain and shade in the sun so the ‘outdoor’ classroom can be played in and used in lessons in all weather conditions. Overgrown areas have been cleared and all the bare areas you can see have been turned over and seeded ready for regrowth in spring! However, children are already loving playing in these additional spaces that have been created. Old tumbledown sheds have been removed, and on the left, we have added the wooden train on a new cleared area that has been covered with log chippings. Children call this ‘Settle Station’ and love playing in this spacious area we have created from what was once an unusable space. Some of the older ‘buddies’ in school have suggested added an authentic train station sign here in the future!





We also installed a play trail made from sustainable, long lasting recycled materials. We lowered the height of some of the hedges too so children could play in a previously under-used area. This is now fully utilised and staff can supervise this area more easily from the main playground.















We also had maintenance work carried out clearing and resurfacing outdoor play areas in the Early Years outdoor areas and bought a shed and other equipment to support our nature/nurture work and encourage children to enjoy phystical activity in the natural play areas. We have also made the sensory garden more accessible so staff can also open this area up. We have recently added hedgehog houses in this area and have 2 resident hedgehogs!













All of the above has had such a positive impact on pupils' well being. We have been able to utilise so many areas in school that were previously not utilised and children have loved every minute being in the outdoors. We still have further work we'd like to do to continue improving our outdoor spaces, but we are very happy with what we have been able to achieve so far.

Thank you so much to the Dry Rigg Quarry Fund, the SDF and all the staff who have supported us with this project!

Report to Yorkshire Dales National Park –

Re Dry Rigg Quarry Natural Environment Fund Grant given to Clapham Sustainability Group for the Swift Project 2024

Thank you for the grant we received in Feb 2024. Here is a summary of how we have used the grant during the year, and what we still hope to do.

Main activities –

A public meeting was held in Clapham Village Hall on 29.02.24 to raise awareness and give information. The talk was given by Hilary McGuire, Conservation Advisor at the RSPB who has special respnsibility for swifts. This was a very informative evening, attended by 30 people, some of whom signed up for swift boxes to be attached to their home.

We also took extensive advice from Tanya Hoare of 'Sedbergh Swifts' who was invaluable both in giving general advice and in providing links to other organisations and people with specific skills.

We then did a scoping exercise on suitable nest sites in the village, taking into account historic information from 'Swift Mapper' https://www.swiftmapper.org.uk/ , local knowledge and the most advantageous sites for nest boxes. Some of the people who had wanted nest boxes did not have suitable sites, or did not live in the 2 main areas we decided to prioritise. We had been advised to work out from areas known to have had nest sites in the past, so prioritised the centre of the village from YDMT, the village shop and a run of houses along Riverside, and a second area of The Green. All of these houses were leafletted offering nest boxes and a total of 11 sites identified, most with 2 nest boxes each.

We bought 20 'uPVC model 30' Swift flat pack nest boxes from Action for Swifts (all recycled /offcut material) and constructed them with nesting rings. Two local builders were employed to safely and securely install the 20 boxes.

In addition we sought permission from the Church to place nest boxes inside the belfry. We had expert advice and practical help from a swift enthusiast who designed bespoke boxes to fit inside the windows of the church tower. The nest boxes were expertly crafted by a local carpenter and secured in place by the tower captain.
We had ordered swift callers to encourage the birds to enter the boxes and nest, but unfortunately these were not avaiable until after the installation. Five of the callers were given out with instructions but people found them difficult to use and they did not all achieve their full potential in encouraging the swifts to nest. We have two more callers to be used for this coming year and hope to install them to full use.

Results – This is a long term project and we did not expect to have nest boxes used during the first year. We did have house sparrows nesting in the swift nest boxes on the shop; this is not necessarily a problem as swifts nest much later than sparrows. We also had observations of ‘bangers’ – younger birds banging their wings on the side of nest boxes to see if they are occupied. There was definite evidence of an increase in swift activity in the village, with regular ‘screaming parties’ and a top count of 25 birds all seen at one time.
This is encouraging and we hope that we will have birds nesting in the boxes this year by ensuring the callers are working properly.
We have used a total of £1,337.82 of the grant and have £1,162.18 remaining.
With the remaining grant money we would like to

- Consolidate the use of callers; this may require using a builder to safely install the callers inside some existing boxes.
- Place at least one camera inside an actively used box so that the nest can be monitored.

Clapham Sustainability Group Swift Project Accounts.

Date	Income	Outgoing	Reason
16.02.24	2,500		Grant
29.02.24		27.00	Clapham Village Hall hire cost.
19.03.24		734.35	Action for Swifts for 20 nest boxes.
5.04.24		161.00	Sedbergh Swifts for 7 swift callers
16.04.24		194.47	Alex Taylor builder for nest box installation.
16.04.24		136.00	Jacob Cudby builder for nest box installation.
6.06.24		85.00	Wyn Roberts for materials and construction of 6 bespoke church tower nest boxes.
Total grant used 2024		**1337.82**	

We can provide reciepts if required.



uPVC model 30 swift nest box

Image from Action for Swifts.

Swift nest boxes in Clapham Church tower, first showing the viewing door with cosy nest material, second showing the boxes against the louvre windows, 4 visible, 2 more below.





Ribble Rivers Trust, Dry Rigg Quarry Natural Environment Fund Report.

23rd January 2025

In November 2023 Ribble Rivers Trust successfully applied for, and received, £9,900 from the Dry Rigg Quarry Natural Environment Fund for the Yorkshire Ribble Rangers project.

This is an ongoing project with a community focus. At its core, this initiative aims to create a vital bridge between the local residents and the safeguarding of the source of the Ribble River, a critical ecosystem that serves as a vital lifeline for a diverse range of flora and fauna.

This project features many elements of river conservation, with a focus on the use of Citizen Science as a means of getting the local community involved in river restoration, making people aware of the issues facing their rivers, and encouraging a sense of stewardship towards their natural resources.

So far, this project has helped to fund a range of work which is helping to build a solid base of volunteers and citizen scientists.

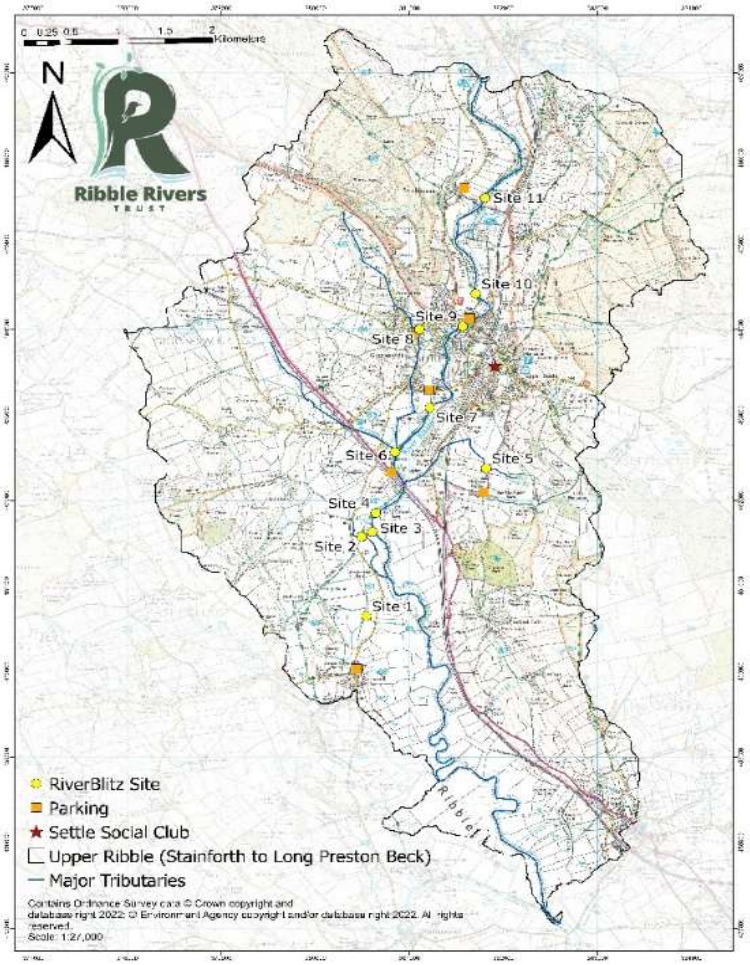


Figure 1. Locations surveyed by citizen scientists



Figure 2. One of the RiverBlitz survey sites

Citizen Science

One of the most significant parts of this project so far has been the Upper Ribble RiverBlitz, which was conducted on 1st June 2024 around the Settle area. On this day alone, the Trust trained 30 volunteers in the citizen science methodology needed to complete a RiverBlitz, including river invertebrate monitoring, water sampling for pollutants, and habitat assessments. This action has helped us to gather data on Tems Beck, Shaw Beck, Long Preston Beck, and Runley Beck, which all feed directly into the Ribble. Additionally, it has also helped us to recruit a number of new citizen scientists, and engage with an even wider audience through the advertisement of the event.

Following the success of this event, further citizen science training days are in the process of being planned for the future, including further RiverBlitz's and Riverfly monitoring.

Community engagement and volunteer days

Ribble Rivers Trust has also been able to team up with residents of Giggleswick through a partnership with Giggleswick Parish Council. The focus here is Tems Beck, which runs through the village. In the past, the subject of beck maintenance has caused some division in the village. However, by working with the parish council on volunteer days and engagement events, Ribble Rivers Trust have been able to engage with residents to resolve the issues, which include nonnative invasive species and litter, in a constructive and river friendly manner through volunteer days and engagement events.



Figure 3. Tems Beck, Giggleswick

Woodland creation and woodland maintenance

One of the other focuses of the project was to get more volunteers involved in woodland creation and woodland maintenance. In the 2023/2024 and 2024/2025 tree planting season Ribble Rivers Trust have/ will be creating 5.5ha number of new woodlands in the project area with just over 6,300 trees. Through this woodland creation Ribble Rivers Trust have been able to identify and recruit new volunteers, who we then call upon to maintain the woodlands they've helped to create. Unfortunately, during this time frame, a core member of the Trust's woodland team left, and their role was backfilled by the Trust's Woodland Maintenance Officer. This has led to a delay in delivering woodland maintenance training, but a new staff member has been appointed and will work to deliver the planned woodland maintenance schedule.



Figure 4. Collecting tree guards gathered by a Settle-based volunteer

Equipment and materials

A significant proportion of the grant included funding for PPE, monitoring kit, training resources, and GIS research. As of the end of January 2025 Ribble Rivers Trust spent just under half of the total budget allocated for PPE, training materials, citizen science equipment etc. The bulk of this has been spent on riverfly kits and other equipment relating to citizen science.

Going forward, the remaining funds will be allocated to similar costs, including pond dipping kits, more tools, and more PPE for volunteers.

Future plans

Ribble Rivers Trust have future plans for more citizen science to build on the work that has been carried out in the area so far, including some monitoring which links in with other river restoration projects such as wetland creation, deculverting, and NFM. There will also be a dedicated Riverfly training day in the area in spring.

Further to this, now that the Trust's woodland team is fully staffed, the Trust's woodland maintenance schedule will be prioritised, and a scheme will be put in place to help volunteers take part in maintaining their local woodlands.

Throughout the spring and summer, the Trust's volunteer and engagement officers will carry our invasive nonnative species control, specifically Himalayan balsam control. There will also be an emphasis on ensuring local people feel comfortable

identifying and controlling Himalayan balsam themselves. In addition to this, we are in talks with a Settle resident who is keen to form a group dedicated to Himalayan Balsam control, RRT are hoping to train this group and help them to get permissions to pull balsam on private land, in the locations where it's needed most.



Upper Ribble RiverBlitz

Overview

On Saturday 1st June we held a fantastic RiverBlitz event in the Upper Ribble catchment, collecting water chemistry, habitat quality and biological community data across 11 freshwater sites. With the help from over 25 wonderful volunteers, we collated a comprehensive picture of water quality across the catchment, the results of which will inform focus for farm advice work, habitat improvements and further monitoring.

Water Quality (Biological)

Our volunteers performed 3-minute kick samples at each site and identified all invertebrates to an Extended Riverfly standard. This gives a good indication of water quality (WQ). From the graph (right), we can see the majority of sites in the Upper Ribble catchment scored either 'Good' (WQ≥ 25) or 'Poor' (WQ≤15) water quality. RiverBlitz results can prompt investigative monitoring to identify issues at sites with poor scores.



Note: Scoring grades are arbitrary, and derived from comparison of scores gained on the day. Note also that the site numbers have purposefully not been revealed.

Across the sites, our most abundant macroinvertebrate group was **olive's (mayflies)**, our rarest group were **hood case-maker's (cased caddisfly)**. And the highest scoring group found were **stoneflies**.

Water Quality (Chemistry)

As well as invertebrates, we tested water for reactive phosphorus levels using Hanna Pocket Phosphate Checkers, which helps the RRT team to pinpoint potential sources of phosphate pollution, which can cause issues for river health. Our RiverBlitz data showed 90% of sites on the day 'passed', as their phosphate levels were under the threshold that the Water Framework Directive deems to be unacceptable.

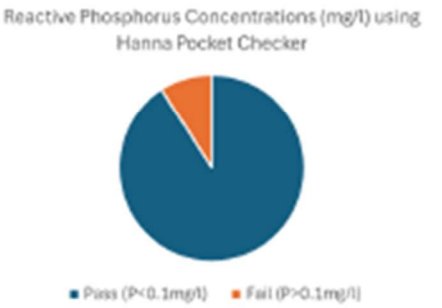
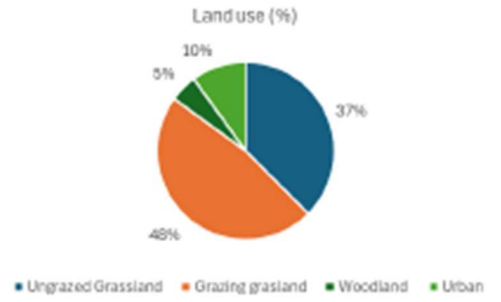


Figure 1a. The RiverBlitz results summary, circulated to citizen scientists taking part in the RiverBlitz

Figure 5a. The RiverBlitz results summary, circulated to citizen scientists taking part in the RiverBlitz

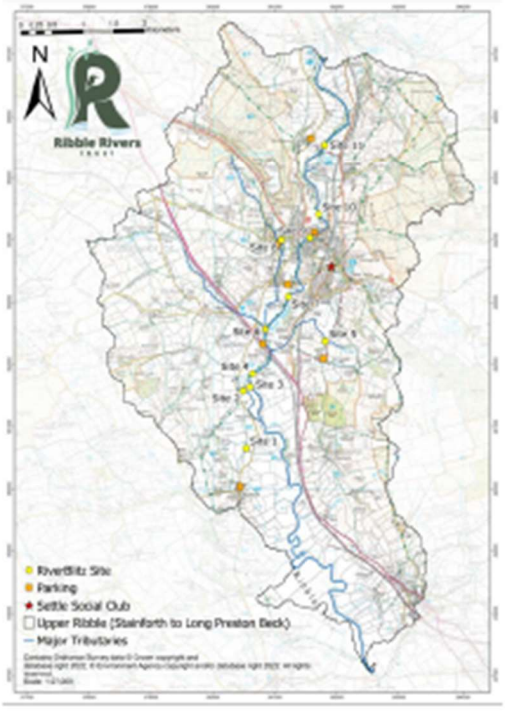
Habitat Quality

The data collected relating to habitat features across the catchment confirmed high proportions of agriculture, with **grazed grassland** to be the **predominant land use (48%)**, followed by ungrazed grassland (37%), urban (10%) and woodland (5%). Some issues with bank structure were highlighted with **45% of sites having earth cliffs**, 18% of sites having 'poached' banks, and at 54% of sites livestock were able to access the river. Additionally, **55% of sites noted tree presence on at least one bankside.** Positively, **Himalayan balsam was absent from all sites.**




Cased Caddisfly 'Other' (Limnephilidae)


Eroded banks, poached by livestock



What's next?

RiverBlitzes have proven an effective method to capture a wide-scale snapshot of catchment health, with sites being strategically located to collect data from multiple tributaries. All this in a very short period of time thanks to our amazing volunteers! We have been refining the RiverBlitz methodology after each event, with input from volunteer feedback, and aim to continue RiverBlitz events throughout the year. Eventually, building up a catchment-wide dataset for the Ribble catchment as a whole, identifying priority areas for our improvement works.

If you would like to get involved in more events, visit ribbletrust.org.uk or follow us on our social channels.

@Ribble Rivers Trust @RibbleTrust @Ribble Rivers Trust

Figure 6b. The RiverBlitz results summary, circulated to citizen scientists taking part in the RiverBlitz