



## River Pool, Linear Park, Lewisham

*“I’ve enjoyed the work, made friends and gained new knowledge and skills through this project” - Local volunteer Jeff Brooks*

### The story so far

This section of the River Pool was so straight, shallow and slow moving, it more closely resembled a pond. Because of its artificially wide and straight channel, it was unable to vary its flow as a natural river would. Through engaging volunteers in weekly sessions over several years, to help narrow the banks, remove wooden boards encasing the river banks and encouraging a wider variety of plants to grow on the riverside, a more natural river now exists.

### The river was restored by

- Creating low level structures (berms) in the river to narrow it and enable it to flow faster
- Removing invasive and dominant plants to encourage the growth of natural riverside plants
- Installing wooden flow deflectors to enable the river to vary its flow in different places

### How has this helped wildlife?

- The river flow is now more varied and sediment deposits at the river edges are creating a more natural river profile; good for both plants and invertebrates.
- The gravel bed is cleaner and its surface scoured by faster flows, which is providing extra niches for wildlife.
- Thinning dense overshadowing riverbank vegetation and removing non-native invasive plants has created a more diverse range of plant species

### How has it helped people?

- Local volunteers now have a strong sense of ownership over the site, and have developed river management skills
- People using Linear Park can enjoy a better view of the river

### Partnership organisations

Thames21, London Borough of Lewisham, Environment Agency.



*AFTER* - marshland plants have colonised the area and the narrowed river is cleaner and faster



*BEFORE* - Creating the low level berm to narrow the river and create new marshy areas;



**Nearest Station: Bellingham or Catford**