



River Wandle, Carshalton, Butter Hill

The story so far

Like many urban rivers, the River Wandle at Carshalton had been widened and straightened with a number of weirs breaking its natural flow. This limited the diversity of habitats and the river suffered pollution from misconnected home sewage pipes and road run-off.

This project restored the natural building blocks of the river ecosystem. By opening up fish passage, enhancing river habitat, and addressing urban pollution, the Carshalton Arm has achieved 'Good Ecological Potential' under the EU Water Framework Directive – the first river in London to achieve this. In recognition, the project is the proud winner of the Urban Category for the 2016 UK River Prize.

The river was restored by

- Lowering 5 weirs
- Installing one fish pass to help migrating fish
- Creating meanders

- Creating riverside wetlands
- Installing 3 silt traps and adding 270 tonnes of gravel
- Thinning trees to increase light
- Planting 3000 plants

How has it helped wildlife?

- Fish can move freely for 2.5km
- Invertebrates and all life stages of fish now have habitat which suits them
- Brown trout are back in the river for the first time in 80 years

How has it helped people?

- Local people are connecting to the river through contributing 3000 volunteer hours
- Better access and beautiful views for local residents

Partnership organisations

South East Rivers Trust, DEFRA (Catchment Restoration Fund), Environment Agency, Heritage Lottery Fund, Thames Water, Wild Trout Trust, London Borough of Sutton



ABOVE – Abundant with green, the river Wandle is now a joy to take in @South East Rivers Trust



BEFORE – The river was previously wide and straight, limiting habitat diversity @South East Rivers Trust



Nearest Station: Carshalton