



Causeway Open Space Backwater, River Crane

"It's great! The new gravel is black with spawning minnows"
- Local resident

The story so far

Reconnecting the River Crane back to its floodplain was the focal point of this project. The river was mostly encased in an artificially straight and wide channel, with little opportunity to flood into any backwater area. Backwaters are small side channels in a river and are an invaluable pit stop for fish as well as other organisms. Dense scrub growing close to the river made it very dark, and the steepness of the banks made it difficult for riverside plants to grow.

The river was restored by

- Clearing trees and scrub to allow light to reach the water once again
- Creating a backwater
- Re-profiling the banks to make them less steep
- Adding gravel to create a riffle – a shallow rough section with fast current, which is a feature of natural rivers
- Transplanting appropriate aquatic plants from further downstream

How has it helped wildlife?

- The backwater provides an area for the river to laterally expand, and helps it handle increased water flows.
- Aquatic life can use it as a refuge, during times of disturbance such as heavy rainfall or storms.
- Different aquatic plants will colonise the area, in turn attracting a variety of aquatic invertebrates.
- Gravel riffle provides spawning grounds for invertebrates and fish.

How has it helped people?

- People can now reach the River Crane more easily to experience it more fully.
- Young people and local residents have been actively involved by helping with planting.

Partnership organisations

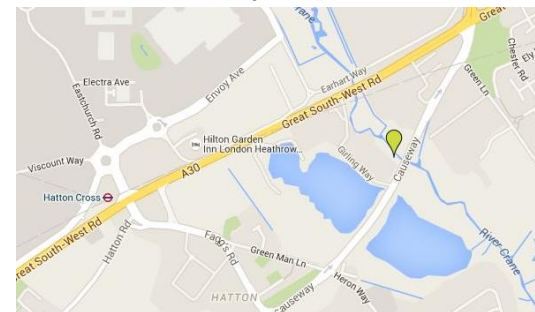
Members of the Crane Valley Partnership, including London Wildlife Trust (project management), LB Hounslow, Green Corridor, Thames Water, the Environment Agency; Carillion, Transport for London, Conway Aecom



AFTER – The new gravel riffle is vital habitat and spawning ground for invertebrates and fish
©London Wildlife Trust



AFTER - The new backwater just after it was created
©London Wildlife Trust



Nearest Station: Hatton Cross