

EA-NWEST

Back to life

bringing the environment back
to the people of the North West



ENVIRONMENT AGENCY

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Introduction

The North West region, possibly more than any other region in Britain, has had to struggle to overcome the legacy of its industrial past. For decades, economic growth in the area was pursued without a thought for the impact on the surrounding environment.

The damage has long since been done but many problems still needed addressing today.

In recent years, the Environment Agency has been leading the way by breathing new life into the region's neglected areas. By working closely with communities and dozens of different organisations we have been resuscitating our waterways, improving access to local beauty spots, strengthening flood defences and transforming previously disused land into havens for wildlife.

This publication highlights just some of the work that the Environment Agency has been involved in, or is currently working on, to transform and revitalise these areas of the North West. We will continue with this varied and wide reaching work as we strive to achieve a healthy, rich and diverse environment for present and future generations.



1. Salford Quays

Special units are pumping up to 30 tonnes of oxygen a day into a 3 km stretch of canal at Salford Quays. This allows aquatic life to return and helps encourage waterfront development projects.



The oxygenation units ▲
 The Lowry Centre ▼
 The modern quays ►





Salford Quays

The scheme

Special units pump up to 30 tonnes of oxygen a day into a 3km stretch of the Manchester Ship Canal at Salford Quays, allowing the return of aquatic life. The scheme was officially launched on 29th July 2001. Water quality improvements have stimulated the regeneration of this locality and helped transform the huge inland harbour into a thriving waterfront complex.

The costs

£4 million - £3.5 million contributed by United Utilities and directed by the Environment Agency, £0.5 million contributed by English Partnerships.

The benefits

- Breathing new life into the water has helped kick-start the whole waterside area. This in turn has become a magnet for local businesses and cultural attractions such as the Lowry Centre and the Imperial War Museum.
- Aquatic life, particularly coarse fish, is returning to the canal which used to be one of the most polluted waterways in the UK.
- The site now has major leisure and recreational potential – and will be used as part of the triathlon event in the Commonwealth Games.

The partners

Environment Agency, United Utilities, Salford City Council, The Lowry Centre, English Partnerships, Manchester Ship Canal and the Mersey Basin Campaign.



A photograph of a river with a waterfall. A salmon is captured mid-jump, leaping over the white, foamy water of the falls. The surrounding water is dark and turbulent. The text is overlaid on the upper right portion of the image.

**10 years ago, a quarter of our rivers were
too polluted to support fish. Not any more.**

salmon are back in the River
Mersey for the first time in
over 100 years

Some of the challenges we faced

1. Salford Quays
2. River Medlock Rehabilitation scheme at Clayton Vale
3. Pennington Brook
4. Manchester Airport – second runway
5. The Wildthings Millennium project
6. Commonwealth Games Stadium

2. River Medlock Rehabilitation scheme at Clayton Vale

Improvements to the river channel and
surrounding recreational area.



- ◀ Children using the dipping pond
- ▶ The footbridge going in
- ▼ Improvements to the weir



River Medlock Rehabilitation scheme at Clayton Vale

The scheme

A strategic network of green routes is planned for the City of Manchester based on river valleys, canals and parks. As part of this network, Clayton Vale will be a key link in the Medlock Valley Linear Park. Local improvements have been made to the river channel and surrounding recreational area.

The costs

£267,000 to be spent by the Environment Agency with a contribution of £150,000 from Onyx Environmental Trust.

The benefits

- Improved access to the watercourse for recreational use.
- Restoration of freshwater fisheries as the water quality improves.
- Continued habitat improvement, and protection of existing habitat to conserve and enhance bio-diversity.

The partners

The Environment Agency, Manchester City Council, Groundwork Trust and the Medlock/Tame Valley Initiative, Mersey Basin Campaign, Onyx Environmental Trust.



3. Pennington Brook

Improvements to a popular canal fishery
and local beauty spot.

Before rejuvenation ▶



◀ After rejuvenation



Pennington Brook

The scheme

Pennington Brook, an outlet of Pennington Flash, is a very popular fishery in the area. The project involved re-enforcing 98m of bank, the creation of paths (along with access for disabled anglers) as well as the planting of shrubs and trees.

The costs

£10,000 – the Environment Agency contributed £5,000, Wigan Council Leisure and Cultural Services £3,000 and other partners £2,000.

The benefits

- The scheme has provided improved access for both disabled and able bodied anglers.
- Conserving and enhancing wildlife by the planting of shrubs and trees.
- Restoring potentially dangerous footpath areas.

The partners

The Environment Agency, Wigan Council Leisure and Cultural Services, and Pennington Flash Angling Association.





4. Manchester Airport

– Second runway

The construction of a second runway at Britain's third largest airport included the provision of a £17 million package of environmental measures.



- Relocation of grassland – wild orchids
- Creating a new habitat for creatures such as the Great Crested Newt
- Bat barns



Manchester Airport – second runway

The scheme

The Agency advised on, and supported a £17 million package of environmental measures designed to lessen the environmental impact of the construction of the second runway.

The costs

£172 million project included a £17 million package of environmental measures.

The benefits

- The diversion of Sugar Brook was carefully designed to copy a meandering section of river found downstream. It incorporated wetland areas, wildflower grassland, scrub planting and mammal pipes along the culverts, below roadways and at the end of the runway.
- Re-location of ponds, woodland, grassland, fish, amphibians and bats.
- For every pond lost due to the development two new ones were created to protect wildlife.
- Three new bat barns were built, 210 bat boxes erected and bat chambers were incorporated into the roof of the Bollin Tunnel.

- 800m of the River Bollin, downstream of the new river tunnel, was released from its constrained course by re-alignment and the introduction of natural river processes. Native species were planted on the banks of the river.

The partners

The Environment Agency, Manchester Airport plc, Manchester City Council, Chester City Council, Macclesfield Borough Council, English Nature, Bollin Valley Partnership, Mobberly Parish Council River Restoration Council and Nottingham University.



5. The Wildthings Millennium project

The creation of an educational sensory garden and pond within the National Wildflower Centre in Knowsley. The aim of the Wildthings schools project was to involve children in creating a change in their immediate environment through wildflowers.

Local school children planting
their own wild gardens
Children enjoying the opening
of the Sensory Garden



The Wildthings Millennium project

The scheme

The Agency's Wildthings Millennium project is split into two parts.

Firstly, the creation of the sensory garden at the National Wildflower Centre and secondly, the provision of plants and wildlife gardening information to 215 local primary schools. The aim is to create wildflower gardens within their school grounds.

The costs

£30,000 was assigned for this project, funded by the Millennium Commission.

The benefits

The sensory garden and schools Wildthings project provides:

- an opportunity to promote the environment through cultivation of wildflowers
- facilities for training and education in wildlife and the environment
- outdoor educational facilities
- demonstration of aquatic habitats
- the opportunity for children from all backgrounds and abilities to learn about their environment
- a way of protecting and enhancing the local environment.

The partners

The Environment Agency, Landlife and the Heritage Lottery Fund.



6. Commonwealth Games Stadium – development of the site

Clean up of a previously industrialised, 20 hectare site in East Manchester, for development of the Commonwealth Games Stadium.



- ◀ Before work began
- ▶ During the redevelopment
- ▶ Construction nearing completion



Commonwealth Games Stadium

The scheme

The site had previously been used for a variety of industrial purposes including: - a cotton mill, dye works, lead works, iron works, a colliery and gas works. The Agency advised on the clearing of the site, ensuring that any risks were removed before construction took place.

The costs

£5 million – contributed by Manchester City Council and Sport England

The benefits

- Restored, protected land, with healthier soils
- The whole area has been given a new lease of life and will boost tourism in the area
- The site has major leisure and recreational potential and will be the main focus for the Commonwealth Games

The partners

Manchester City Council
and Sport England.
The Environment Agency.



These are just some of the examples of what can be achieved when we all work together. Through this work we are helping to bring the environment back to the people of the North West

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