



**Severn Trent's Great Big Nature Boost  
(The Entire Severn Trent Region)  
(Severn Trent Water)**

**BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award Category: *Client-Led Project Award***

**Project overview**

- After unveiling ambitious plans to improve biodiversity across the Midlands through our Great Big Nature Boost (GBNB) campaign, we are investing over £1.2bn to improve the environment, help sustainability and support our customers.
- Over the past 24 months we have **protected and enhanced over 7727 hectares** of land for Biodiversity.

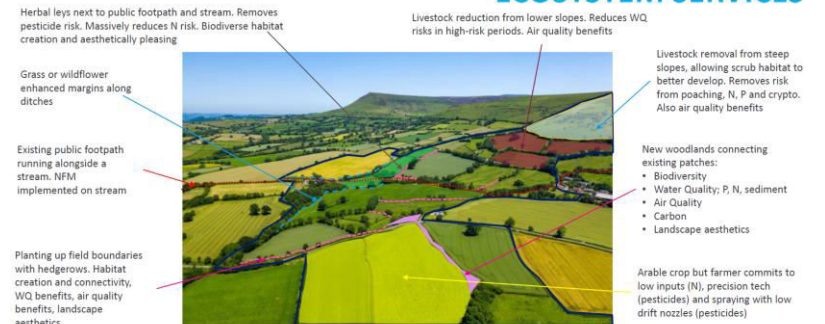
**What were the biodiversity conditions on site, prior to the enhancement?**

A significant proportion of our work has been approached through engagement with farmers in our region to transform their farmland through interventions such as sowing an annual pollinator mix, diverse herbal leys, wildflower margins, creating arthropod banks and restoring hedgerows. Mostly these activities have been undertaken on previously arable farmland so that the biodiversity can increase, whilst providing farmers with 'natural' pest control by encouraging predatory species of insects and birds to return that had been lost, or reduced in numbers. The primary driver for this is a catchment based approach to reduction on chemical pollutants in the watercourses.



Severn Trent GBNB Logo

**OUR APPROACH TO NATURE CONSERVATION & ECOSYSTEM SERVICES**



*An example of how we engage with farmers in our region to provide natural capital benefits*



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**BIG Biodiversity Challenge Award Category: *Biodiversity Legacy Award & Client-Led Project Award***

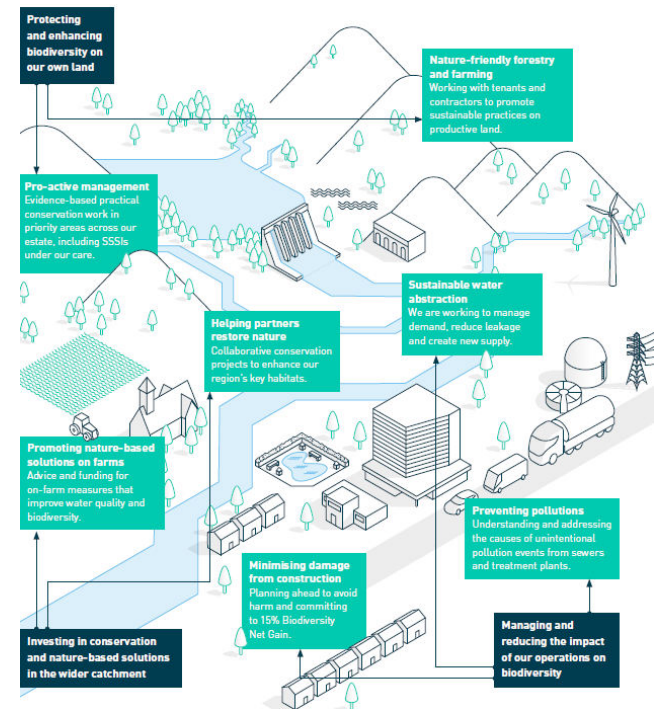
**What were the reasons behind this project ?**

When we look after nature, we look after water. Investing in protecting and improving the natural environment is more than just the right thing to do, it is also a practical business imperative. Our environment is the vital partner to our reservoirs, treatment works, and pipelines; capturing, holding, cleaning, and carrying our water. A flourishing environment plays an important role in helping us deliver our core activities more effectively and efficiently.

The water cycle operates at landscape scale, so, while we cannot control the landscape, we can make strategic investments to influence key factors that affect our business.

**Our biodiversity strategy in action**

How Severn Trent works across the landscape to protect and restore nature



Severn Trent – How we work across the landscape to protect and restore nature



**the BIG Biodiversity Challenge**  
do one thing

## What were the biodiversity measures taken?

Implementing landscape scale projects on over 7727 hectares, and allowing nature to grow and connect, we are promoting the biggest asset a water company can have, Nature. Working directly with 72 different organisations, 80 different landowners and over 429 farmers from our region, we deliver biodiversity improvements to improve the 'Ecological status' of watercourses through a suite of integrated solutions that boost biodiversity at the same time as reducing chemical and sedimentation inputs to improve water quality now, and into the future. Examples include the reintroduction of Beavers into the Midlands; the control and eradication of Invasive Species as well as creating habitats to encourage populations of wildlife to recover.

We have distributed over £11 million in grants for water quality and biodiversity, negating the need for £74 million of investment in our treatment processes. We are investing another £24m by 2025. We estimate that for every £1 we spend we avoid £2 - £20 of water treatment costs. We also estimate that £1 spent on prevention generates £4 of wider environmental benefits such as avoiding dead zones caused by eutrophication, or the harm to wildlife caused by pesticides bio-accumulating in the food chain. Moreover, for every £1 invested in hedgerows, farmers would see a £1.73 return from higher crop yields and reduced spend on pesticides.

Our work reduces key risks to pollinators by improving habitat and reducing chemical inputs - pollination provides a range of essential services, contributing an estimated £400m per year to the economy. We engage with farmers aimed at boosting their knowledge and improving chemical spray efficiencies, providing information on reducing spray drift and a set of low drift spray nozzles to minimise the risk of pesticides reaching habitats such as watercourses – in the first year 218 farmers signed, responsible for over 41,000 ha of land.

## Non-chemical weed control equipment (inter-row weeders, rakes, comb harrows and hoes)

Pesticide priority

**STEPS040**

Grant value: 50% up to £10,000



*Funding options for farmers to implement biodiversity*

## Closed Transfer Systems (CTS) for pesticides

Pesticide priority

**STEPS041**

Grant value: 50% of cost and installation



### How does this help the environment?

A closed transfer system (CTS) is a device that allows pesticide formulations to be transferred from its container to the spray tank with negligible exposure to the operator and the environment. Closed transfer systems therefore enable operators to manage crop protection and nutrition products in a safer and more environmentally friendly way.



**Annual pollinator mix**  
Grant value: £1000 (10% of total cost) for one hectare (max 10 hectares)

**How does this help the environment?**  
This mix of annual and perennial plants provides a range of habitats and food sources for a wide range of pollinators. It will help to increase the abundance and diversity of pollinators in the area.

**Eligibility**  
Each farm can claim up to 218 per year of annual pollinator mix per hectare. The grant is available to all farms, including those with a watercourse on the farm. The grant is available to all farms, including those with a watercourse on the farm.

**How does this help my business?**  
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**Specialist advice:** Contact your local Natural England office for more information.

**STEP026**  
Grant value: £1000 (10% of total cost) for one hectare (max 10 hectares)

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**Diverse herbal leys**  
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**Wild flower margins and mini-meadows**  
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**Arthropod banks**  
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**STEP027**  
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**STEP028**  
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### Further information

In December 2022 we launched our Biodiversity, Pollinator and SSSI Strategies, making them publicly available to show that what are delivering is for the long-term. These strategies are available here:

[Biodiversity](#) | [Environment](#) | [About Us](#) | [Severn Trent Water \(stwater.co.uk\)](#)

This sets out our approach to delivering improvement habitats and biodiversity across our region, and why it's important to us to go above and beyond what could be expected for Water Company. Our dedication to delivering this can be seen in the figures supplied in our 2022 Sustainability report that tracks our progress on delivering our commitments:

- GOAL: IMPROVE BIODIVERSITY ON 5,000HA OF LAND BY 2027
  - **PROGRESS: 7727 HECTARES**
- GOAL: PLANT 1.3 MILLION TREES BY 2030 -
  - **PROGRESS: 694,144 TREES**
- GOAL: 2,100 KM OF RIVER IMPROVED IN ENGLAND BY 2025 -
  - **PROGRESS: 3,700 KM**
- GOAL: EXPAND CATCHMENT MANAGEMENT SCHEMES TO 42 CATCHMENTS BY 2025 -
  - **PROGRESS: SCHEMES IN 42 CATCHMENTS ARE ALL ON TRACK TO BE DELIVERED**

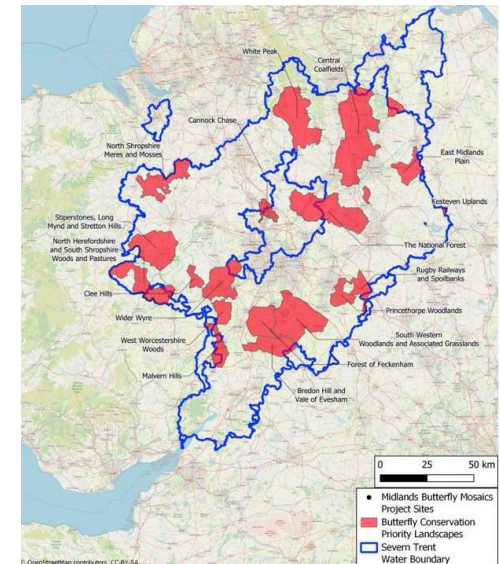
The work we are doing is important to more than just ourselves though, below is a list of references which show how what we're able to deliver across the region is providing benefits beyond our boundaries:

- [Severn Trent sets standards for Nature Recovery Network | Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust](#)
- [Beaver Reintroduction - Nottinghamshire](#)
- [Canal & Rivers Trust funded project for eradication of Invasive Species](#)
- [Beaver Reintroduction - Derbyshire](#)
- [Butterfly Conservation Trust Funding](#)
- [Commonwealth Games - Legacy Forest](#)
- [Commonwealth Games - Tiny Forests](#)
- [Moor Water Severn Trent | Moors for the Future](#)



Beaver Kits born at Idle Valley Nature Reserve – Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust

*Our partnership project with the Butterfly conservation trust (BCT) focuses on improving connectivity in the East and West Midlands. The interventions are focused around rare and threatened butterfly and priority moths species as well as more common species. The aspiration is to enhance diverse habitats that make up the Midlands in priority landscapes (red).*





## Project Team

- Severn Trent Water Catchment & Biodiversity Team

## What was the motivation for carrying out the enhancement?

We know that the water cycle operates at landscape scale, so, while we cannot control the landscape, we can make strategic investments to influence key factors that affect our business.

We are passionate individuals that are linking and facilitating committed environmental organisations across the region to ensure that we are leaving the environment in a better condition that which we inherited it.

This level of dedication and investment has seen us smash our biodiversity target of 5000 hectares by over 2000 hectares so far, and 5 years ahead of schedule, giving more time for biodiversity to recover in our region.



*Close up of timber dams & water retention used in Peatland Restoration*



*Healthy Moorland, retaining and filtering water through peatland restoration*