

PRESS RELEASE



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New charity gives failing river a helping hand

A Sussex charity is giving vital help to a failing river after completing a project that will improve conditions for fish.

The Arun & Rother Rivers Trust, a newly formed charity dedicated to improving the quality of the catchment's rivers and streams, took one year to complete the work to the Costers Brooks in Midhurst, which it hopes will improve fish populations both in the Brook and the Western River Rother.

Whilst parts of the Costers Brook provides excellent habitat for a range of fish, including sea trout and eels, as it meets the Western River Rother, the watercourse is currently failing to meet the European Union's legally binding Water Framework Directive targets for fish.

The Arun & Rother Rivers Trust worked closely with the Wild Trout Trust and employed the services of specialist contractors experienced in river restoration to make it easier for fish to access and travel up the Costers Brook, where they can successfully spawn. This work has now opened up several kilometres of the river that were previously inaccessible to fish.

Sir Sebastian Anstruther, Chairman of the Arun & Rother Rivers Trust, said of the project:

"We're delighted to have completed the work to the Costers Brooks which we hope will help improve fish populations in the Western Rother, breathing life back into the river and helping it to meet EU standards. We are incredibly grateful to the landowners, Andy Thomas of the Wild Trout Trust and the Ouse & Adur Rivers Trust for working with us as we progressed this vital project.

"Our rivers are an important part of where we live, work and play but abstraction, drought and development put them under increasing pressure. It's vital that we take action now to protect the future of our rivers and the wildlife they support. We are looking forward to progressing with many more projects like this one and are keen for local people to work alongside us as we play our part."

The Ouse and Adur Rivers Trust secured funding from Defra for the Costers Brook project before the Arun & Rother Rivers Trust had formally registered as a charity.

-Ends-

Notes to editors:

For more information about the Arun & Rother Rivers Trust, visit <http://www.arrrt.org.uk/>.