



WUF UPDATE: The ARROW STORY

16th June 2016

It's time to tell you about some problems we have been trying to resolve over a lengthy period of time with (at last) some good news and who we should thank for it.

The Arrow is a significant river that rises in Radnorshire, Mid Wales and flows essentially eastwards to join the Lugg near Leominster. Historically, it always had a good head of trout and grayling. A few salmon once spawned in its lower sections but this ceased when the fish pass on Hampton Court weir on the Lugg "disappeared", but started again when the then EA built a pass there in 2003. Then, from 2008 onwards, we built a series of baulk passes and other easements that allowed salmon to ascend to the very top of the catchment, perhaps for the first time in hundreds of years.

One of the barriers at Kington was a blockstone replacement for an historic weir that had previously been washed away. Following consents, we built a prebarrage pass in 2010 that allowed fish to get upstream. Subsequently, salmon and large trout were found to have spawned quite some distance above.

However, an ad hoc inspection in 2014 by WUF found that the weir had been raised with a sheer sided concrete crest, which filled the original running lines. Its purpose was to ensure as much water as possible was diverted through a leat and thence through a turbine. It transpired that no consent had been obtained for this and it was also clear that no parr, smolt or adult brown trout would escape damage in the turbine.

EA issued an order to the weir owner to remove the raised section, which was taken on appeal to the Planning Inspectorate. The EA stuck with it and recently we heard that the appeal was



The weir at Kington: note the raised crest with vertical sides. This has enabled most of the flow to be directed via a leat to a turbine



Fifty shades of grey! This was how the Gilwern brook, an Arrow tributary lookd in heavy rainfall before settling tanks were envisaged

rejected and that the previous height of the weir should be restored. So a very big thanks to the EA's Dane Broomfield and fishery team members Chris Bainger and Brecht Morris. Also a pat on the back for ourselves for finding it!

Another problem for the Arrow has been the frequent discharge of sediment from the quarries at Gore, Strinds and Dolyhir (see here for the problems that fine sediments bring to rivers). The former discharges into the Hindwell (a Lugg tributary) while the latter two into the Arrow via the Gilwern/Back Brook. We and most of Kington have taken the matter up countless times with Tarmac and Natural Resources Wales, the upshot of which is that the quarry is building settling tanks and other infrastructure, due to be finished early this autumn, to prevent sediment reaching either river.

We have also secured funding from Tarmac's Landfill Fund and received a generous donation to complete the access work on the Arrow and continue habitat restoration in this important part of the Wye catchment. Another big thank you is in order there.



Redbrook: *Is this discharge safe in an SAC river?*

Thus ends a lengthy saga which has held back the recovery of the Arrow for some time for both trout and salmon and of course the all important invertebrate community can now recover.

That leaves the third issue, a sewerage discharge at Redbrook causing problems on the lower Wye that seems to have evaded close scrutiny (if enters below a monitoring station). Can we dare hope for a third success in one year?

All the best from WUF

Details of our Projects can be found [here](#).

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EA & NRW Emergency Hotline: 0800 80 70 60 Dwr Cymru/Welsh Water Emergency Sewage Line: 0800 085 3968

Rainfall at Llanstephan 2016 to date: 20" ('15: 28", '14: 54", '13: 39", '12: 47", '11: 29")

Bookings and availability Tel: 01874 712 074

This email was sent by The Wye & Usk Foundation.



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