



Vision and Objectives

Produced by:

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Our Vision

Creating healthier, inclusive and more climate resilient river valleys in the Irwell catchment, working in partnership with a range of organisations including charities, local authorities, the water company and more to enhance the natural value of our water environment.

The Partnership's Core Objectives are:

- Cleaner Water for wildlife and the public
- Naturally Functioning and Resilient Waterbodies
- Natural Habitats which support Native wildlife and Biodiversity

Our overarching objective is to work collaboratively to make the water environment in the Irwell catchment more adaptive and resilient to the effects of climate change, whilst addressing environmental inequalities. To do this, we will:



Create clean and plentiful water for wildlife and people



Restore our water bodies to improve their natural form and function



Work to improve biodiversity and protect habitats



Engage and connect more people & communities with their local water environments



Influence decision makers to ensure the natural environment is enhanced and protected



Support and contribute to integrated water management practice

New Published Reports

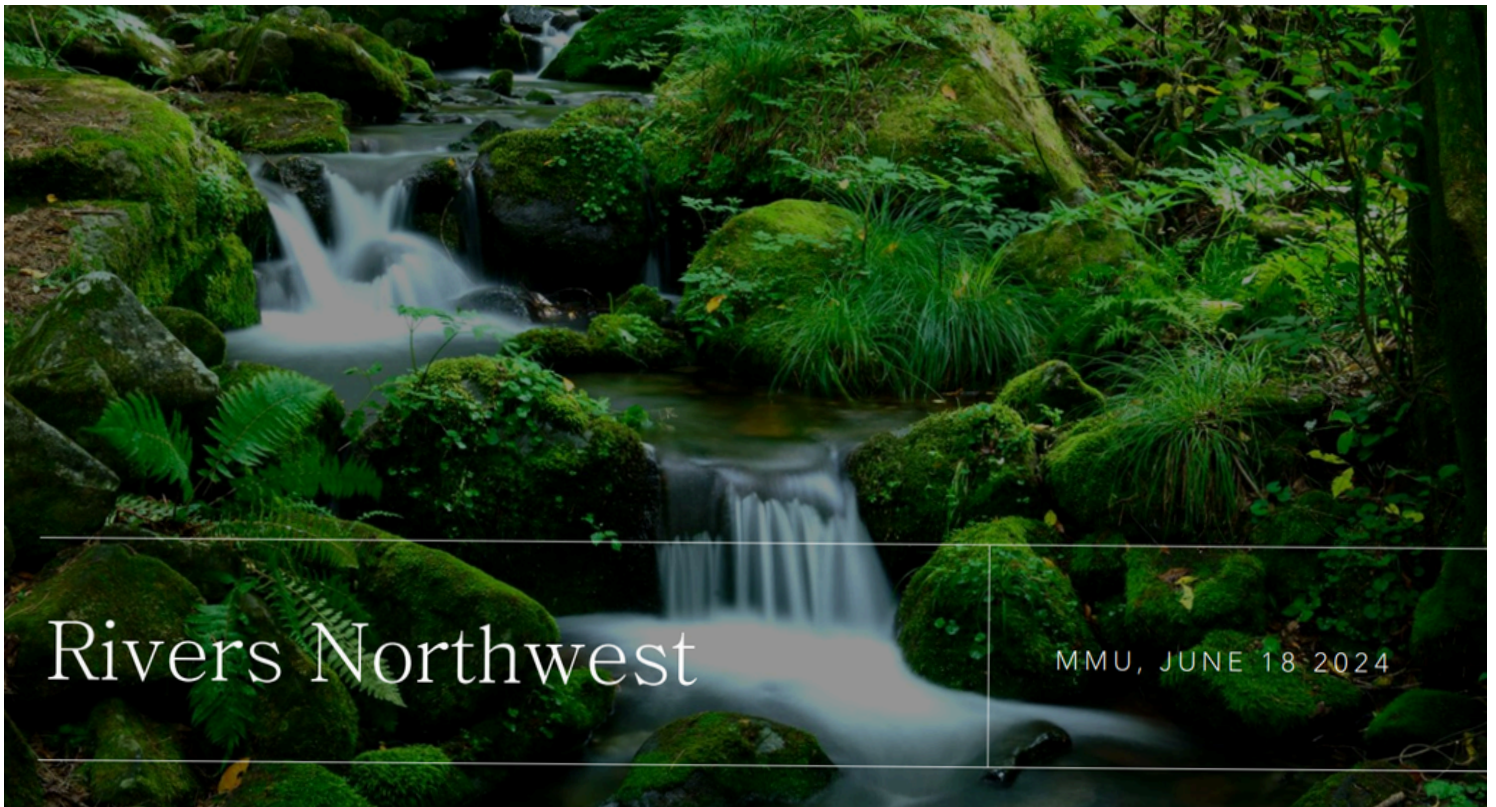
The latest [water situation reports for June 2024](#) have been published by the **Environment Agency**. These reports provide a comprehensive overview of the water resource availability across various regions, including the North West of England. This data is crucial for understanding the current state of water resources and any emerging trends or issues.

Key highlights:

- 1. Record Rainfall:** May 2024 saw exceptionally high rainfall in North West England, with some areas recording up to 193% of the long-term average, marking the second wettest 3-month period ending in May since 1871.
- 2. Increased River and Groundwater Levels:** River flows and groundwater levels were predominantly above normal to exceptionally high, reflecting the significant rainfall impact across the region.
- 3. Reservoir Storage:** Reservoir storage in North West England increased due to the heavy rainfall, reaching 92% capacity by the end of May, higher than both the average for this time of year and the previous year.



For more information on Water Resources in the North West and the action we can take, visit our [Dispelling the Myth project webpage](#) [here](#) and please share with your networks.



Rivers Northwest

MMU, JUNE 18 2024

Rivers Northwest

In June, Aimee attended the 'Rivers Northwest' meeting held at Manchester Metropolitan University - to present on behalf on the Irwell Catchment Partnership. The meeting was a gathering of academics and organisations across the north west all working on Rivers.

Speakers included academics and representatives from University of Salford, University of Manchester, University of Liverpool, The Mersey Rivers Trust, Environment Agency, United Utilities, and the Ribble River trust, amongst other.

Speakers presented on a wide array of topic and areas of specialty, including:

- Improved species monitoring.
- Peatland restoration at Kinder Scout and downstream impacts.
- Improvements in Upper Mersey invertebrate diversity.
- Continued widespread challenges around pollution and invasive species.
- Various NFM projects and predicted increased Upper Irwell flows by 2080.
- Collaborative efforts across universities and agencies .

Key stakeholders



- Two way KE
- Translation of research for impact
- Widening network between organisations
- Engagement
- Increase network e.g.,

Academic institutions



+ wider networks



8 years working in knowledge exchange and impact generation ... putting research into practice!

+ Growing NW partnership – Douglas / Tawd

If anyone is interested in viewing more details from this meeting, please view the full presentation [here](#).



Spotlight on Nature North

Facilitating investment in nature recovery in the North: Investable Propositions led by Nature North partners

- Nature North: A New approach to secure green finance with 11 partners.
- Policy Influence: Embedding nature into policy, including carbon credit and biodiversity net gain (BNG) examples.
- Catchment Approach: Integrating various ecosystems (peat, urban, rivers, woodland) for a comprehensive strategy.
- Healthy River Catchment: Aiming for complex funding mixes to support multiple outcomes, including cooling, carbon storage, and flood risk management.

Nature North’s Role: Acting as a broker between corporate entities and local groups, creating a pipeline for projects and reducing competition for funding.

Nature North – Key Aims

Policy

Embed nature and its benefits across policy areas in the north of England to support delivery of green growth and climate resilience.



Investment Propositions

We aim to drive greater investment into nature recovery in the North of England from both public and private sources.



Partnership

We can achieve more through collaboration and partnership.



Spotlight on Nature North



Where are new sources of investment coming from and why?



Next Steps

Several ICP projects have been included in a Nature North prospectus, as part of their pipeline of projects to seek funding for. Included:

- Investing in resilient farmed landscapes in the Upper Irwell (NEIRF)
- Medlock Valley Nature Partnership
- Middle Brook GEP
- Bringing the River Irk to Life (BRIL)

Get in touch:

Helen Batt, Nature North Business Manager

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Nature North info@naturenorth.org.uk

[Click here to view Helen's full presentation](#)

Other ICP updates:

Working groups:

Barriers & Fisheries

- Irlam Weir on the River Mersey has a possible Larinier fish pass design pending contractor input; Irlam Locks' operational protocol for fish passage during salmon migration is under review; Adelphi Weir's design awaits Fish Pass Panel review and funding; feasibility studies for Jubilee, Creams, and Sion Weirs are ongoing. Ringley Weir's future involves potential removal or fish pass, contingent on Water Resources Management Plan outcomes. EA and UU surveys and feasibility studies continue for various barriers, with recent progress shared on the INNS Mapper App. Funding and design developments for the Irk, Medlock, and Roch river barriers are ongoing
- EA Fish monitoring data available now – <https://environment.data.gov.uk/ecology/explorer/>

INNS

- Bradshaw Brook Fly Fishers - continued control work, funded through ICP. Recent efforts involved 10 supervisors and BBFC volunteers, clearing 168 sqM of Himalayan Balsam over 45 hours along the Jumbles-Bradshaw footpath. Trials with a herbicide mix of 25ml Roundup ProVantage in 10L water proved effective, with treated HB stems withering in 10 days. All treated areas and photos are on the INNS Mapper App.
- Friend of captain's clough and Bolton Green Umbrella – currently working on projects to tackle INNS

Catchment Management of Nutrients

- Ongoing – rural work is focussed on bringing in blended finance to fund P reducing interventions on farms in the Catchment. 28 Farm Water Management Plans written so far.
- Looking towards urban stream of work with Stormwater Shepherds.

Bringing the River Irk to Life

- Groundwork & Mersey Rivers Trust have been successful in their EOI to National Lottery Heritage Fund for Harpurhey Wetlands work. They will now move on to make a full application towards the end of the year.
- Looking to make connections with Network Rail and Victoria North to continue conversations around Scotland Road Weir.

Other ICP updates:

Partner Updates:

Medlock Valley:

Jo Fraser from Manchester City Council reports a new master plan around Holt Town, led by Studio Egret West, aiming to integrate green and blue infrastructure in challenging areas. The ICP will seek to influence.

“The vision is to transform the area into a sustainable, digitally driven new town within the city, with capacity for around 4,500 new homes. The NDF will propose generous, safe and green public space that will include designs for future living - underpinned by good health and well-being principles, including new active travel routes.”

Mersey Woodlands:

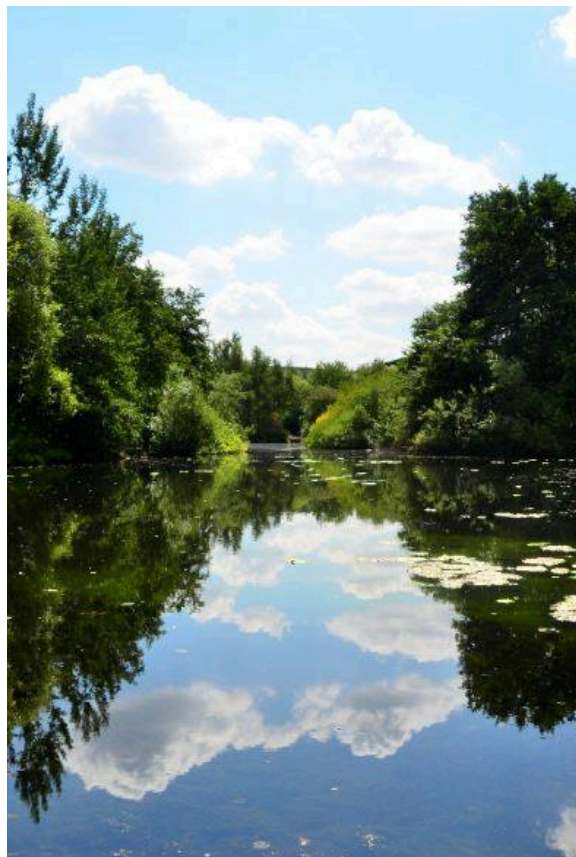
Successful bid for natural flood management (NFM) projects for the Irwell, in collaboration with the Woodland Trust, with business cases being developed.

Catchment Plan:

The ICP’s bid to the University of Manchester’s Knowledge Transfer Partnership has been submitted. If successful, recruitment will be underway for a role focusing on data analysis and feasibility studies, starting at the end of 2024. We will be working on producing an updated, innovative catchment plan and project pipeline.

GM’s Integrated Water Management Plan

Aimee and Andrea met with the IWMP team to discuss integration with the ICP. We will be linking with them on data platforms, seeking private finance, and aligning our project pipelines. Jill Holden from the team will continue to attend our ICP meetings.



Other Funding Opportunities



- **Fund to help farmers manage water resources:** The £1.6 million fund will be used by farmers to investigate different methods to manage water in their area. Projects could include multi-farm reservoirs, treated waste-water recycling systems, water trading and sharing schemes.
- **Climate Action Fund:** The Climate Action Fund is supporting communities across the UK to take action on climate change. Open to partnerships with a mix of organisations and sectors. Applications open on Wednesday 27 March 2024.
- **Stronger Communities Fund:** Open to groups delivering work which ensures public spaces are maintained and improved for the benefit of local people, or expanding access to open spaces for all members of the community.

Water Restoration Fund bids

The Catchment Partnership successfully submitted the following bids to Defra's Water Restoration Fund:

- Bringing the River Irk to Life, weir removal and restoration work (development)
- Engaging land managers in the catchment for restoration work on Cribden Moor, Littleborough and Greenfold Reservoir (development)
- Great Bubble Barrier, investigative work for an installation in the catchment (development)
- Bradshaw Brook restoration work (development)

Next ICP meeting

Our next Irwell Catchment Partnership Meeting will take place on Tuesday 20th August 2024 from 10:00am – 12:30pm [Online on Teams](#). We know some of you will be on holiday at this time but hope as many of you can attend as possible. **Please let Aimee know if you would like to invite anyone else in your organisation.**

Full agenda to follow. We will cover:

- Working Group & Partner updates
- Funding updates
- Strategies & networks to influence/input into: LNRS, GM IWMP etc.

We have spaces in our spotlight presentation section, if anyone would like to present for 10 mins with 5 mins of Q&A please let Aimee know ASAP.

If you have any agenda items or presentations you would like to share with the group, please contact aimee.brough@groundwork.org.uk

New ICP Working Group - Lower Irwell

A new Lower Irwell Working Group, led by Mersey Rivers Trust, is forming under the ICP to address various issues in the lower reaches of the river, including fish passage improvements, water quality, habitat restoration, and flood management.

The group will define its geographical boundary and scope at the first meeting, which will be held after the summer. Those interested in joining should email John to participate john@merseyrivers.org

