

The River Wharfe: its wonders and woes

St Peter's Church Hall

Saturday, July 20th 2024, from 1.30 pm

An afternoon and evening meeting to talk about the Wharfe, especially its middle reach where it runs from Bolton Abbey, through the village of **Addingham** towards and beyond Ilkley.

We will focus on both its **wonders and woes** with slide talks, displays, demonstrations, films, walks and discussions.

How well do we understand the river and its wildlife? How healthy is the river? How safe is it to swim in? And how can we restore and protect it for future generations?

The afternoon session will be held in the Church Hall from 1.30 pm to 5.30 pm. **Entrance is free but seats need to be reserved by emailing aeg@addingham.info or phoning 01943 839792.**

The evening session will use the Church Hall for displays and a film but there will also be outdoor activity including a walk to Low Mill. The session will start at 6 pm and finish with a bat walk at 9.30. **No registration needed!**

Programme

Afternoon session. Chairs: Charlotte Simons and Rick Battarbee

12.00: Church Hall open **for setting up**

1.30 – 2.00:Doors open to the public, registration, refreshments, displays

2.00 – 2.15:*Charlotte Simons* (YDRT) **The Wharfe and its catchment**

An introduction to the Wharfe as a Dales River setting out the catchment management plan and the roles of the Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust and the Dales to Vale River Network (DVRN)

2.15 – 2.30:*Steve Westerman* (Wharfedale Naturalists Society):**River Wharfe: its iconic wildlife species**

An introduction to the birds and mammals dependent on the river and threats to their populations from habitat loss

2.30 – 2.45:*Jon Grey* (Wild Trout Trust and Lancaster University): **Wild Trout in the Wharfe: fish passage and habitat restoration**

How to restore wild brown trout populations in the main river and its tributaries to take care of all life-cycle stages

2.45 - 3.00: *Donna Easter* (Environment Agency): **The Addingham Low Mill Fish Pass Project**

Problems of migratory fish passage on the Wharfe and plans to install a fish pass on the weir at Low Mill

3.00 – 4.00: Discussion followed by **tea and coffee and displays**

4.00 – 4.15: *Rick Battarbee* (Addingham Environment Group and UCL) and *Claire Campbell* (Environment Agency): **Pollution problems on the Wharfe**

Impact of sewage discharge and agricultural runoff on water quality and monitoring faecal bacteria concentrations at the bathing water site in Ilkley

4.15 – 4.30: *Isobel Douterelo* (Sheffield University): **Using DNA to identify sources of pollution and to improve the management of designated bathing waters**

It's not just about *E. coli*. Other pathogens and their sources are or may be just as important

4.30 – 4.45: *Emma Brown* (Yorkshire Water): **Wastewater Solutions for the Wharfe**

Designing and delivering engineering solutions to improve water quality in Ilkley and Addingham

4.45 – 5.00: *Alistair Boxall* (York University) **Emergent pollutants**

Many chemicals, including personal care products, pharmaceuticals and veterinary medicines find their way into rivers from sewage effluents and agricultural runoff. Are they a threat to river wildlife?

5.00- 5.30: **Final discussion**

Evening session (no tickets required – just turn up)

6.00 – 9.30: **Browse the displays (see below)** in the Church Hall

6.00 – 7.00: **Demonstrations** of electro-fishing (*Jon Grey*), riverfly sampling (*Steve Cheetham*) and algal biofilm sampling (*Malcolm Secrett and Rick Battarbee*) on Town Beck in Church Field. Meet outside the Church Hall at 6.00 pm

7.00 – 8.30: **Walk and talk to Low Mill** to visit the Weir and the Sewage Pumping Station, led by *Donna Easter* (EA) and *Emma Brown* (YW). Meet outside the Church Hall at 7.00 pm

8.30 – 9.30: **Film:** Underwater photographer *Mark Barrow* introduces his new film “**River Wharfe: a living artery**” which documents the beauty of the river along its full length filmed from both beneath and above the water. In the Church Hall starting at 8.30 pm

9.30 – 11.00: **Bat walk and talk** along the river and back to the village via Back Beck Lane with *John Altringham* and *Malcolm Secrett*. Meet outside the Church Hall at 9.30 pm.

Displays in the Church Hall

12.00 – 1.30: Setting up– all displays as far as possible to be **left in place until 9.30 pm.**

Addingham Environment Group: [Biofilms under the microscope](#) (*Malcolm Secrett*)

Salmon and Trout Conservation Trust: [Riverfly identification](#) (*Steve Cheetham*)

Wild Trout Trust: [Brown trout, minnows and bullheads](#) (*Jon Grey*)

Wharfedale Naturalists Society: [Kingfishers, otters and other wildlife](#) (*Steve Westerman*)

Environment Agency: [The Low Mill Weir fish pass](#) (*Donna Easter*) and [microbial source tracking of faecal bacteria](#) (*TBC – Jane Dacombe?*)

Yorkshire Water: [Sewage treatment plans for Ilkley and Addingham](#) (*Emma Brown*)

Ilkley Clean River Group: [Campaigning for a clean river](#) (*Becky Malby, Karen Shackleton and Di Lury*)

York University: [Chemical pollution in Yorkshire rivers](#) (*Alistair Boxall*)

Rick Battarbee

June 22nd 2024

