



Our plan for the River Don

Executive Summary



In March 2011, the Environment Minister and DEFRA commissioned a range of 25 "Catchment Pilots" across the country to investigate and report on ways to co-ordinate catchment planning to help achieve the Water Framework Directive (WFD).

The aim of the Water Framework Directive (WFD) is to protect, improve and promote the sustainable use of water.

As part of the Don pilot, the Don Network was formed by a wide range of stakeholders facilitated by the Environment Agency and Yorkshire Water. Over a period of 18 months, the Don Network met to discuss the issues and set out a vision, opportunities and actions for stakeholders.

Our Vision

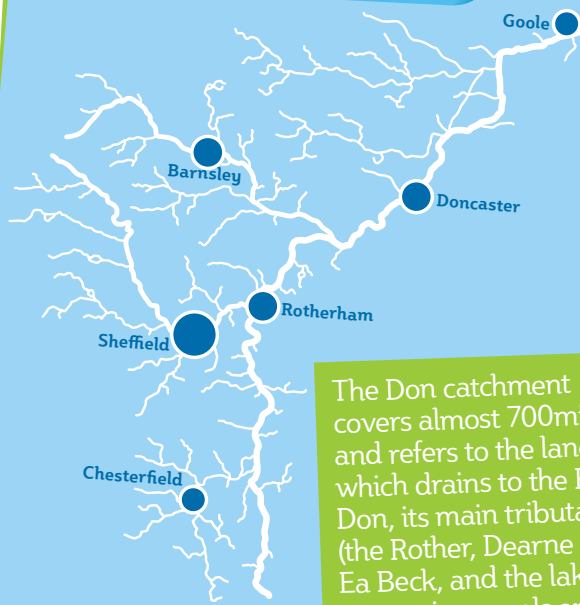
1. Water quality that supports a natural ecosystem and public use and enjoyment.
2. Collaborative flow management – balancing ecology with the needs of catchment users.
3. A more natural habitat – through the removal of invasive species and sensitive management of ecological networks, with self-sustaining fish populations including migratory salmon and trout.
4. Best agricultural practice – to manage land to prevent water pollution.

What are the key challenges?

- Single source pollution – e.g. sewage works or discharge pipes
- Cumulative pollution – from numerous small discharges, including highways drainage and agricultural land
- Major engineering works – which have harmed the river's natural ecosystem

Only 7% of the waterbodies in the Don catchment currently meet the standards set by the WFD, so there is lots of work to be done.

The Don catchment



The Don catchment covers almost 700 miles², and refers to the land which drains to the River Don, its main tributaries (the Rother, Dearne and Ea Beck, and the lakes, reservoirs, canals and groundwater).

Our plan for the River Don

WFD principles will be incorporated into new and ongoing projects so that by 2027, all waterbodies in the catchment comply with the Water Framework Directive. Key opportunities and actions in 'Our Plan for the River Don' include:

- Land management
 - Address polluting land management practices
- Morphology
 - Remove man-made obstructions to fish passage
 - Develop joint strategies for managing woody debris and managing sediment in the catchment
- Maintenance of the river channel
 - Simplification and better guidance for organisations to work together in planning and carrying out river maintenance
- Habitats and Species
 - Control of invasive plants and non-native animal species
 - Riverside management regimes which encourage habitat creation, restoration and conservation
- Water Quality
 - Collaborative working and adoption of new techniques to improve river quality
- Sustainable Urban Drainage Systems (SUDs)
 - Raising awareness of SUDs
 - Encouraging local authorities and developers to incorporate SUDs more consistently in new developments
- Reservoirs management
 - Protection and maintenance of water supply reservoirs
 - Possible use of upland reservoirs to help in reducing flooding



How can you help?

Whether you are a politician, a member of a local interest group, part of a statutory authority or a member of the public, here are some of the things you can do to support the delivery of 'Our Plan for the River Don':

- Recognise the contribution of rivers – to communities, wildlife and recreation in everything we do
- Disseminate the Plan widely throughout the Don catchment
- Mainstream the actions in the Plan within your organisation's policies
- Share your data with others
- Promote the requirements of the WFD – consider how your actions might help or hinder it
- Look at problems holistically & in partnership with other organisations. Contribute and pool resources effectively throughout the catchment
- Take part in the forthcoming consultation on the formation of the Humber River Basin Management Plan 2016-2022
- Volunteer to support local improvement projects on the Don
- Take simple actions – like conserve water, or consider more carefully what you put down the plughole.



How to find out more

View 'Our Plan for the River Don' in full at www.environment-agency.gov.uk/research/planning/131506.aspx or www.yorkshirewater.com/riverdon, and on many of the Don Network members' websites.

Contact the Environment Agency's **Catchment Coordinator for the Don and Rother, Joanne Briddock**, on 01709 312795 or joanne.briddock@environment-agency.gov.uk