

Collingham Beck

National grant awarded to help restore our becks

The Yorkshire Dales Rivers Trust (YDRT) is a charity organisation that works to protect and enhance the rivers Swale, Ure, Nidd, Wharfe and Ouse and their catchments. In 2017 East Keswick Wildlife Trust, Mott MacDonald and the YDRT worked together to bid for funding for our local area. We were successful and YDRT were awarded £50,000 to lead on the Collingham Becks project.

The funding will enable the local areas surrounding Collingham Beck to be part of a national pilot study, which will develop understanding around the methods and benefits of working with nature to try and reduce the risk of flooding. The project already draws on the support of many groups within the area and we hope to attract additional funding and volunteer support to allow even more to be achieved.

The area involved includes all the land that naturally drains into Collingham Beck, a tributary of the River Wharfe. This includes Keswick Beck, Bardsey Beck, Scarcroft Beck, Collingham Beck, Shadwell Beck and smaller tributaries. The main villages in this catchment are Collingham, Bardsey, East Keswick, Wike, Scarcroft and Shadwell.

The project will work to enhance natural processes, storing water on the land and slowing down rain that runs quickly off the land, thus helping to reduce the risk of flooding. The project aims to create natural buffer strips alongside the becks, plant trees and hedgerows across steep slopes to allow rain to soak into the ground and form small pond features to trap water. This will help to reduce flood risk to the properties and roads in the villages near the becks and improve habitats both in the river and around the catchment for wildlife and our enjoyment.

The project will take place over five years. The YDRT are developing a monitoring plan on how to effectively detect the impact of these proposed measures and how they will help to reduce flood risk in the catchment. At present the East Keswick Wildlife Trust and Mott MacDonald are active partners and the six parish councils have all given their support. We are looking to expand our steering group and welcome the involvement of other groups, individuals and land owners that will be key in helping us deliver this project. We are particularly keen to hear from land owners that will be keen to get involved at an early stage.

If you would like to know more then please get in touch via collinghambecks.nfm@gmail.com