

# River Avon Newsletter

Issue 3 May 2016



**Festival of Nature makes a splash with a River Avon theme this June**

The UK's largest free celebration of the natural

**Bath & North East  
Somerset Council**

This Newsletter has been prepared by Bath & North

world arrives in Bath from 14<sup>th</sup> June, closing with a family-friendly celebration, marking the grand finale of a wild adventure along the River Avon in Royal Victoria Park on 25<sup>th</sup> June.

The 25<sup>th</sup> June is the climax of two weeks of river-themed events running along the Avon from Bristol to Bath. This is the first time in its 14-year history the Festival has celebrated the region's waterscapes. The Bath finale event will open with a procession led by a willow sculpture portraying the Spirit of the Avon, which will wind its way to the main event in Royal Victoria Park.

An array of national and local organisations will flock to the park for a family-friendly day of hands-on activities, innovative arts and inspiring entertainment designed to showcase the natural world.

Join in for one of the events that the WaterSpace Partnership are organising for the Festival, together with our many fabulous volunteers and local interest groups:

- [WaterSpace Study Open Studio Event](#) – Preview the ideas and proposals being considered to improve the River Avon & Canal in the area. Drop in on Saturday 18 June 10am – 3pm to the Widcombe Social Club, Bath.
- [Behind the Scenes at Sewage Treatment](#)

East Somerset Council on behalf of the River Avon Project. The Council is working in partnership to deliver a Water Space Study in 2016/17.



#### **Water Spaces Open Studio Event - 18<sup>th</sup> June 2016**

Emerging design ideas and concepts for improvements to the River Avon and Kennet & Avon Canal with Bath & North East Somerset will be shared at a drop in open studio event at Widcombe Social Club.

[http://www.bnhc.org.uk/?post\\_type=festival-of-nature&p=8954](http://www.bnhc.org.uk/?post_type=festival-of-nature&p=8954)

[Works](#) – Salford Sewage Treatment Works  
Saturday/Sunday 18/19 June

- [WaterBlitz](#) - 10-25 June. Help us collect 500 water quality samples, sign up for your free pack.
- Join one of our nine guided [River Avon Walking Tours](#) – 14-26 June. Some are bookable.
- [Brilliant Bats Event](#) – Join us for an exciting Big Bat Survey event after dusk in Bath's City Parks on 21<sup>st</sup> June. Sign up in advance as spaces are limited to 35 people, and it is booking fast.
- [Self-Guided Walking Maps](#) – explore the River Avon and Kennet & Avon Canal, with some new route guides coming soon to be launched at this year's festival!
- [Festival Finale Event](#) at Royal Victoria Park – 25 June. Visit our marquee for family friendly bat craft activities where you can learn about species living along the River Avon, eat like a bat and create your own bat box to take home. Find out about projects you can get involved with.

All activities are free of charge and work on a first-come first-served basis.

For more details and to see the full two-week Festival programme, go to

[www.festivalofnature.org.uk](http://www.festivalofnature.org.uk)



WaterBlitz 10-25 June 2016

Take part in the first ever Bristol Avon WaterBlitz and join the race to collect 500 water quality samples from across the catchment area during the Festival of Nature.

[www.wessexwater.co.uk/waterblitz/](http://www.wessexwater.co.uk/waterblitz/)



Find out more via the Festival promo video:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JHHPASPINOc&feature=youtu.be>



## **Project Updates**

### **Water Space Study**

The Boaters Survey 2016 has just been launched. It will run for six weeks **from 24th May to 4th July 2016**, and will look at how far live-aboard boaters travel, the type and size of crafts used, and the range of facilities they need whilst on the canal and river in the B&NES area. Results will be made available to the Bath WaterSpace project to enable facilities such as water points, sewage disposal and mooring areas to be planned and provided.

The survey will be carried out by Consultancy Atkins Plc on behalf of the newly formed Bath WaterSpace Partnership (made up of B&NES Council, Canal & River Trust, the Environment Agency and Wessex Water). The survey will help the partners better understand what the needs are for live-aboard boaters and how they can be better provided for.

- [Link to e-survey](#)
- [Downloadable survey](#) (Pdf)

You can download a poster to advertise the

survey [here](#).

A project brief for the WaterSpace Study is available on the website [here](#).

For information on the river and canal and the Water Space Study, visit [www.waterspacebath.org.uk](http://www.waterspacebath.org.uk) or email [riveravon@bathnes.gov.uk](mailto:riveravon@bathnes.gov.uk)

### **Bathampton Riverside Community Project**

A visit was made to the Bathampton Riverside Community project where volunteers from both Batheaston and Bathampton have been working tirelessly to improve the appearance of the riverside area, and where new benches and community noticeboards have now been installed. It is looking great, and local volunteers have plenty more ideas for consideration as part of the WaterSpace project. This capital project was funded by B&NES Council's River Corridor Fund.

### **Volunteers Restore Dundas Aqueduct Toll House**

Over the last year, volunteers working with the Canal & River Trust have restored a nineteenth-century toll house at Dundas Aqueduct on the

Kennet & Avon Canal in order to create a welcome station for people visiting the area and historic structure.

Dundas Aqueduct, Kennet & Avon Canal provides a beautiful sight, it was built by renowned waterway engineer John Rennie to take the canal over the River Avon, and was the first canal structure to be designated as a Scheduled Ancient Monument in the country.

The Toll House originally took fees from boats passing from one waterway to the other, but it will now be used as a welcome point for the many visitors of the area.

Huge congratulations to everyone involved – you have given new life to this beautiful building!

### **River Safety Ladders**

Works are due to commence to repair the River Safety Ladders to the rear of Bath Spa Railway Station in June/July 2016. This capital project was funded by B&NES Council's River Corridor Fund.

