

River Avon Newsletter

Issue 7 November 2016



New Community Hydro Power Project on the River Avon

Work to install a new hydro-electric scheme to replace decorative wooden water wheel at Bathampton Weir is currently underway, with completion due in December 2016.

Bath & North East Somerset Council is investing in the part community-owned energy project on the River Avon, making a loan to the Old Mill Community Hydro project at the Old Mill Hotel next to the Toll Bridge.

The project has been developed by community enterprise Bath & West Community Energy (BWCE) in partnership with Mongoose Energy.

The existing decorative water wheel at the site, which was installed around 1987, will be replaced with a new modern water wheel, capable of generating enough electricity to meet the annual demand from more than 20 typical homes.

The new water wheel will include screens to protect fish and eels in the river.

The scheme will contribute towards around 20 megawatts of renewable energy already being generated in Bath and North East Somerset. Collectively this is enough to power more than 4,500 homes.

The scheme will generate an estimated £50,000 funding over its lifetime for BWCE's Community Fund which, by the end of the year, will have re-invested nearly £100,000 of BWCE's surplus income back into local community organisations delivering low carbon and fuel poverty reduction projects in Bath and the surrounding area.



The Water Space Study

The draft Water Space Study, looking at new ways to use the river and canal system around Bath, is nearing completion. Bath & North East Somerset Council, the Canal & River Trust, the Environment Agency, and Wessex Water are working together in the jointly-funded study, to identify projects to transform and revitalise the waterways along the River Avon between Bath and Keynsham, and along the Kennet and Avon Canal between Deep Lock and Dundas Aqueduct.

**Bath & North East
Somerset Council**

This Newsletter has been prepared by Bath & North East Somerset Council on behalf of the River Avon Project. The Council is working in partnership to deliver a

The study will not focus on strategic flood projects, but will instead look at all other aspects impacting on the river and canal, including boat moorings, river navigation by boats, leisure and recreation opportunities and wider wildlife and habitat enhancements. For more information see: www.waterspacebath.org.uk

Over 70 project ideas have been put forward by the public, partner agencies and key stakeholders. Some of the projects already have part or full funding.

Public consultation on the draft Study is due to take place in January 2017!

Focus Group, Interviews & Resident Survey

In addition to the Boater Survey undertaken this year, we have run a focus group to look at local waterways related matters. One to one interviews, primarily with the commercial and voluntary and commercial sectors have also been undertaken to inform the Water Space Study. A full report of all consultation undertaken will be available on our website shortly.

If you are Bath & North East Somerset residents look out for B&NES Council's upcoming Voicebox Survey which contains waterways questions!

Water Space Study in 2016/17.



River Avon Bat Project

Thanks to some talented local graphic animation students and our ecologists at Clarkson & Woods we have just launched a new animated cartoon about how bats use the River Avon in Bath! You can view it here: <http://bit.ly/2dDXz6N> and at the bottom of this newsletter.

You can find out more about the River Avon Bat Surveys here: <http://bit.ly/2dL8co3> The findings of this intensive survey will be published in December 2016.