

South Cumbria Rivers Trust (SCRT) works in collaboration with the Environment Agency (EA) and Natural England (NE) to identify, scope and deliver work that benefits the special nature of the River Kent. The River Kent and its tributaries are designated as a Site of Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) and a Special Area of Conservation (SAC).

BOWSTON WEIR REMOVAL: Removal works completed



A BOWSTON UPDATE

ISSUE DATE: Friday 29th July 2022

Works have now completed on the Bowston weir removal project. Access ramps for the machines have been graded back and all site machinery and boundary fencing has been removed and the contractors have now left the site.

We have had a number of questions and queries over recent days which we hope to answer in this update.

- The fish pass. As mentioned in our previous update, the fish pass adjacent to the wall on the right-hand bank has been retained following recommendation of the structural engineer. Full removal was our preferred initial plan but the tie-in of the fish pass and of the concrete slab atop of it to the wall adjacent, requires that it remains. We are in discussions with the Environment Agency about public safety and measures needed to secure the site. We will update you on progress.*
- Landscaping and aesthetics. From one or two comments received there appears to be an expectation that some form of landscaping work will now follow the works. To be clear, this never formed part of the scheme; the reasons why are repeated here. The work that has been conducted with the removal of the weir was always intended to be a template for the river itself to naturally create its own form. Significant change can be expected particularly above the old weir site as the river begins to re-shape the gravels that have deposited here in large quantities because of the weirs influence. These gravels will also begin to move downstream and some will help to fill and naturalise the rock rapid and provide a base for finer silts and vegetation later. This similarly applies to the bank areas; it is important that the river naturally establishes its new banks and that flora and fauna naturally regenerate in and around them to take advantage of new habitats. It will take time and a sequence of higher flows for the river to begin to adjust and for the riverscape to adopt a softer look, as part of the re-naturalisation process.*
- A small number of trees will be planted over the autumn/winter 2022/23 as conditioned by South Lakeland District Council to replace those removed to gain access into the river; this has been agreed with the landowner. Beyond this mitigation planting we currently have no further tree planting permissions in the immediate area. However, as discussed earlier we will also be looking for additional tree planting opportunities where this is possible.*

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- *Fencing will be erected next to the public footpath on the left-hand bank to keep livestock out the river and a Bowston weir interpretation board will be installed in the autumn.*

We look forward to seeing how natural processes further shape this section of river over the coming months.

Regards,

The SCRT Team

CONTACT US

Please contact us at admin@scrt.co.uk if you have any questions or queries, where we will attempt to answer them within three-working days. Information and updates can be found on our website: <https://scrt.co.uk/what-we-do/current-projects/bowston>