

**BOROUGH COUNCIL OF KING'S LYNN & WEST NORFOLK**

**ENVIRONMENT AND COMMUNITY PANEL**

**Minutes from the Meeting of the Environment and Community Panel held on Tuesday, 14th November, 2023 at 4.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn PE30 5DQ**

**PRESENT:** Councillor S Collop (Chair), M Bartrum, J Bhondi, P Bland, A Bubb (substitute for H Humphrey), R Colwell (substitute for J Ratcliffe), P Devulapalli, P Kunes, S Sandell and A Ware.

**PRESENT UNDER STANDING ORDER 34:** Councillor Everett

**MEMBERS OF THE PANEL ATTENDING REMOTELY** (did not take part in any votes): Councillor Bullen and Barclay

**PORTFOLIO HOLDERS:**

Councillor M de Whalley – Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity

Councillor T Parish – Leader of the Council

Councillor J Rust – Portfolio Holder for People and Communities

Councillor S Squire – Portfolio Holder for Environment and Coastal

**OFFICERS:**

Martin Chisholm – Assistant Director

Ged Greaves – Corporate Performance Manager

Honor Howell – Corporate Governance Manager

Mark Whitmore – Assistant Director

Jo Russell – Care and Repair

Stuart Ashworth – Assistant Director

Claire Wiggs – Senior Ecologist

Lorraine Gore – Chief Executive

**BY INVITATION:**

Andy Millar – Norfolk and Suffolk County Council

Dr Sarah Taigal – Gaywood River

Jonathan Ward – Net Zeros Innovation and Delivery Manager

**EC50: APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Humphrey and Ratcliffe.

**EC51: MINUTES**

**RESOLVED:** The Minutes from the previous meeting were agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**EC52: DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Colwell declared an interest in item EC56: Gaywood River and Habitat Restoration as a Member of Gaywood River Revival.

**EC53: URGENT BUSINESS**

There was none.

**EC54: MEMBERS PRESENT PURSUANT TO STANDING ORDER 34**

Councillor Bullen (remotely) and Councillor Everett.

**EC55: CHAIR'S CORRESPONDENCE**

There was none.

**EC56: GAYWOOD RIVER AND HABITAT RESTORATION - PRESENTATION FROM NATURE RECOVERY PARTNERSHIP MANAGER FROM NORFOLK AND SUFFOLK COUNTY COUNCIL**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on You Tube.](#)

Dr Sarah Taigel GIS and Fluvial Specialist helping develop citizen science projects on the Gaywood River presented information to the Panel relating to research conducted, what was causing issues with the river, channel morphology and the impacts on wildlife. She explained that evidence was being collated to highlight issues and action that could be taken and provided detail of the role that the Borough Council could play. A copy of the presentation is attached.

Andy Millar, Nature Recovery Partnership Manager for Norfolk and Suffolk County Council presented information to the Panel relating to the Local Nature Recovery Strategy (LNRS). He explained the Government legislation and the need to work to find a solution to restore and deliver nature whilst maintaining flood management requirements. Information was provided on what nature recovery could achieve and options to restore ecosystems.

Andy Millar provided information on the tools that Local Authorities had at their disposal including influence through Planning Policy and during the consideration of planning applications and he reminded the Panel of the Biodiversity Net Gain requirements which were soon to be introduced in 2024.

The Chair thanked Andy Millar and Dr Sarah Taigel for their presentation and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

Councillor Colwell thanked Andy and Sarah for attending the meeting and hoped that Members had found the presentations informative. He explained that his takeaway from this presentation was that it was crucial for Councils to know where the problems in the catchment were so that they could focus on these areas. He also commented that the ten step plan was useful and there was a need for flood modelling.

Councillor Kunes asked about contamination issues and Councillor Colwell commented that investigations were ongoing.

In response to a question from the Portfolio Holder for People and Communities, Councillor Rust, it was clarified that the landscape had historically been dredged but this year there had been a change in management and procedures and it was likely that de-silting had been carried out by the Internal Drainage Board.

The Portfolio Holder for Environment and Coastal, Councillor Squire, clarified that the Council did have representatives on Norfolk Rivers and assumed that the Council and other related organisations would be engaged in the Nature Recovery Work being undertaken by Norfolk and Suffolk County Council. She asked how far along the mapping work was, as the Borough Council had not been invited to take part as yet. Andy Millar explained that all Norfolk and Suffolk Districts would shortly receive a formal invitation to be involved in the process. Currently project planning work and engagement strategies were being worked on, although the LNRS was unlikely to be adopted until early 2025.

Assistant Director, Stuart Ashworth informed the Panel that the LNRS would be crucial to the Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG) requirements that were being introduced, and made reference to the timescales. Andy Millar explained that there were still areas and projects that could help inform BNG without the LNRS in place, and he agreed that the full guidance on BNG was still awaited.

Councillor Bubb referred to the state of the water at Gaywood River and in The Walks and commented that it was often of good quality when entering the sea, so work should be carried out to work backwards from there to see where the problems were.

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity, Councillor de Whalley commented that the Borough Council had established a Biodiversity Task Group and he hoped that this work would be part of the Task Groups considerations. He referred to the Council's Green Infrastructure Plan and that it had last been updated in 2010 and may require a review.

The Vice Chair, Councillor Devulapalli asked how the Panel could be engaged and kept up to date in the process. Andy Millar commented that he was happy to be contacted as needed. The Norfolk and Suffolk

wide engagement process would be commencing soon and the Borough Council would be involved as a stakeholder.

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Parish commented that environmental implications were a priority in the Councils Corporate Business Plan and he encouraged Members to engage in the process as required.

Dr Sarah Taigel agreed to share information on protected species on the Gaywood River with the Borough Council's Senior Ecologist, Claire Wiggs.

**RESOLVED:** The Panel noted the information.

EC57: **NET ZERO COMMUNITIES UPDATE**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on You Tube.](#)

The Climate Change Manager presented the report which provided an update on the selection process and Norfolk project for the Norfolk Net Zero Communities pilot project.

The Net Zeros Innovation and Delivery Manager, Jonathan Ward, provided members with a presentation on progress with the project. A copy of the presentation is attached. He reminded Members that the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership had been successfully awarded funding from the Fast Followers Fund to deliver a community themed project focussing on citizen preparedness and clean growth. Information on project governance and delivery was outlined in the presentation and the project would be delivered through Norfolk Climate Change Partnership who had established a Project Steering Group and Advisory Group to oversee the project.

The Norfolk Climate Change Partnership had been carrying out a selection process for one community in each of the seven Norfolk Districts for the pilot project. Selection decisions would be informed by themes including community and households, routes to engagement and the potential for Carbon reduction.

The Corporate Performance Manager explained that information had been sent to all Parishes and 22 responses had been received. Background data for each area was then looked at as part of the shortlisting process. An announcement on the preferred option would be made to Councillors soon.

The Chair thanked officers for their report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

The Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Biodiversity, Councillor de Whalley thanked officers for their work on bringing this opportunity



forward and commented that this was an exciting project and the beginning of the journey in carbon reduction in communities.

In response to a question from the Portfolio Holder for People and Communities, Councillor Rust, it was confirmed that there was a link with Borough Council's Energy Efficiency Officer.

The Vice Chair, Councillor Devulapalli commented that all communities needed to work to become net zero and asked if this project would be sustainable going forward. Jonathan Ward explained that this pilot project would create a template which could be rolled out further across communities and other funding opportunities were being looked at through the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership.

Councillor Kunes commented that he was disappointed that only 22 Parishes had responded.

Councillor Bullen commented that it was vital to engage with isolated and rural households that were not part of a community.

**RESOLVED:** The Environment and Community Panel noted progress with the project and would receive periodic update reports.

EC58: **CABINET REPORT - ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on You Tube.](#)

The Corporate Governance Manager presented the report which considered the approval of an amended policy and statutory process for Assets of Community Value and the Community Right to Bid. It was explained that the refresh was required following the transfer of Legal Services back in-house and it was hoped that the revised document was now more user friendly and less technical. The document had been completely rewritten, however the fundamentals had not changed.

The Corporate Governance Manager highlighted the amendments to the delegations to authorise Assets of Community and make non-material amendments to the policy, as set out in the recommendations.

The Chair thanked the Corporate Governance Manager for her report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

Councillor Bhondi commented that this policy was a good tool to protect community assets and he had used it to protect an asset in his Ward. He encouraged Councillors to consider protecting assets of community value as required.

In response to a question from the Vice Chair, Councillor Devulapalli, the Corporate Governance Manager explained that religious use was not a criteria and the definitions were cultural, sporting and recreational uses that provided social value. The Corporate Governance Manager agreed to confirm if religious buildings fell into the definition of social value within the scheme.

*Following the Meeting the Corporate Governance Manager confirmed that any land or building could potentially be listed as an Asset of Community Value and it is for the nominating group to make the case, provide the evidence and proof as to how the particular piece of land or building meets the criteria of the act.*

Councillor Bubb asked if there were limitations on what could be included and it was confirmed that it had to be an asset that was in current use for the benefit of the community and needed to be protected for social wellbeing.

**RESOLVED:** That the Environment and Community Panel supports the recommendations to Cabinet, as set out below.

a) Cabinet is recommended to agree the Borough Council of King's Lynn and West Norfolk policy and statutory process for Assets of Community Value, as attached and recommend to Council for approval.

b) The material update to the policy is changing the delegation to authorise Assets of Community Value from council officer to Portfolio Holder in consultation with the Executive Director of Place and relevant ward members.

c) Cabinet is recommended to give delegated authority to the Monitoring Officer to make future non-material updates to the policy (non-material definition – amendments which will not significantly change the policy by will update in line with legislative changes or will achieve improvements to the process).

EC59: **WORK PROGRAMME AND FORWARD DECISION LIST**

**RESOLVED:** The Panel's Work Programme and Cabinet Forward Decision List was noted.

EC60: **DATE OF THE NEXT MEETING**

The next meeting of the Environment and Community Panel would be held on **Wednesday** 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2024 at 4.30pm in the Town Hall, Saturday Market Place, King's Lynn.

EC61: **EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC**

[Click here to view the recording of this item on You Tube.](#)

**RESOLVED:** That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act, 1972, the press and public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act.

EC62: **EXEMPT CABINET REPORT - FRAMEWORK AGREEMENT FOR CARE AND REPAIR HANDYPERSON PREVENTION SERVICE**

Officers presented the report, as included in the Agenda which set out the Framework Agreement for the Care and Repair Handyperson Prevention Service. It was explained that the tender process had been carried out and contractors would be appointed from January 2024.

The Chair thanked officers for the report and invited questions and comments from the Panel, as summarised below.

The Portfolio Holder for People and Communities, Councillor Rust commented that this was an important service that the Council provided to help with independent living and enabling people to stay in their homes for longer.

**RESOLVED:** That the Environment and Community Panel supports the recommendations to Cabinet as set out in the report.

**The meeting closed at 6.11 pm**

once a source of  
CRYSTAL-CLEAR  
water

NOW THE WATER  
QUALITY IS POOR

WILDLIFE IN THE  
river and nearby IS  
absent

AND THERE ARE  
FEW IF ANY  
POSITIVES

WHY?

Minute Item EC56:

# THE GAYWOOD RIVER

# QUICK INTRODUCTION



For the past 25 years I have been using and developing GIS and other spatial technology, but chalk rivers and the wider water environment a focus since 2010



PhD researched how spatial technology (GIS, AR, VR, digital hubs and citizen science) can contribute to managing landscapes at a catchment scale.



Practical geographer too - experienced with API, river geomorphology, NFM, fixed point photography and MorPH condition surveys, and peat restoration



The research which spanned four years and was funded by the ESRC developed apps for use in real world projects with local rivers trusts, specialised in lowland chalk river systems, ecosystem services and ecological network mapping



Lots of different roles! Such as project support & management for catchment partnerships and the EA, Green spaces mapping for UEA and peatland restoration opportunities.



Volunteer for Norfolk Rivers Trust as a data manager on the Wensum and Lark CasTCO project, a three-year pilot demonstrating the value of water quality monitoring by citizen scientists.





# CHALK STREAMS



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The world has fewer than 300 chalk streams - and England has most of them. These streams occur only where chalk bedrock meets the Earth's surface, making them globally rare.

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Their stable, cool, nutrient-rich waters allow chalk streams to support an exceptionally high number of species - so much so that these habitats are sometimes described as "England's rainforests".

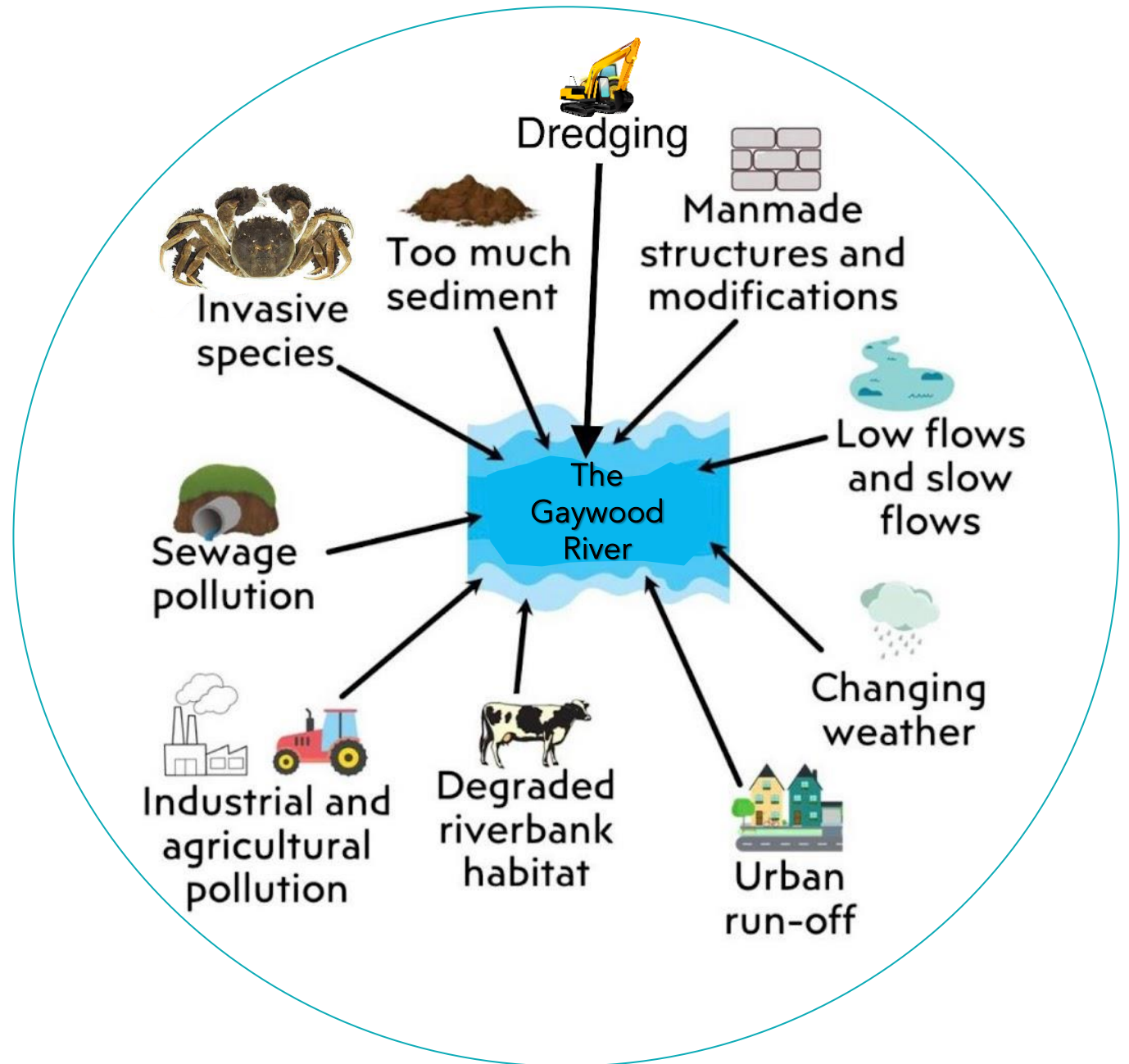
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Sadly, although some teem with life, the health of England's chalk streams is threatened by a wide range of human activities. As a result, many of the country's - and thus the world's - chalk streams are not reaching their ecological potential.





# WHAT'S CAUSING THE ISSUES?



# WATER QUALITY – SEWAGE & ROAD RUNOFF

501

Infrastructure is overwhelmed easily by rain (and more flash events happening)

STW struggling to meet capacity, but more housing is planned

Septic tank point sources are harder to test due to access but should not be ignored

Road runoff also affects wildlife



11.0 P = 3.94mg/l  
BUT the WFD target for chalk rivers is 0.04mg/l





# CHANNEL MORPHOLOGY



Over straight and over wide channels remove the ability of the chalk stream to 'wobble' which cleans the gravel, oxygenates the water and allows silt to settle out of the system

502



Incised channels disconnect the river from its natural floodplain and increase the risk of flooding downstream - the aim should be to slow the flow across the whole catchment -







*Black anaerobic silt devoid of invertebrates*

## SEDIMENT

- Sediment generated through routine maintenance smothers gravels and turns the river (and swans) brown
- Over-wide and over-deep channel leads to slower flow - with no meandering channel the water is less oxygenated impacting fish
- The thick silt is heavily polluted with little life



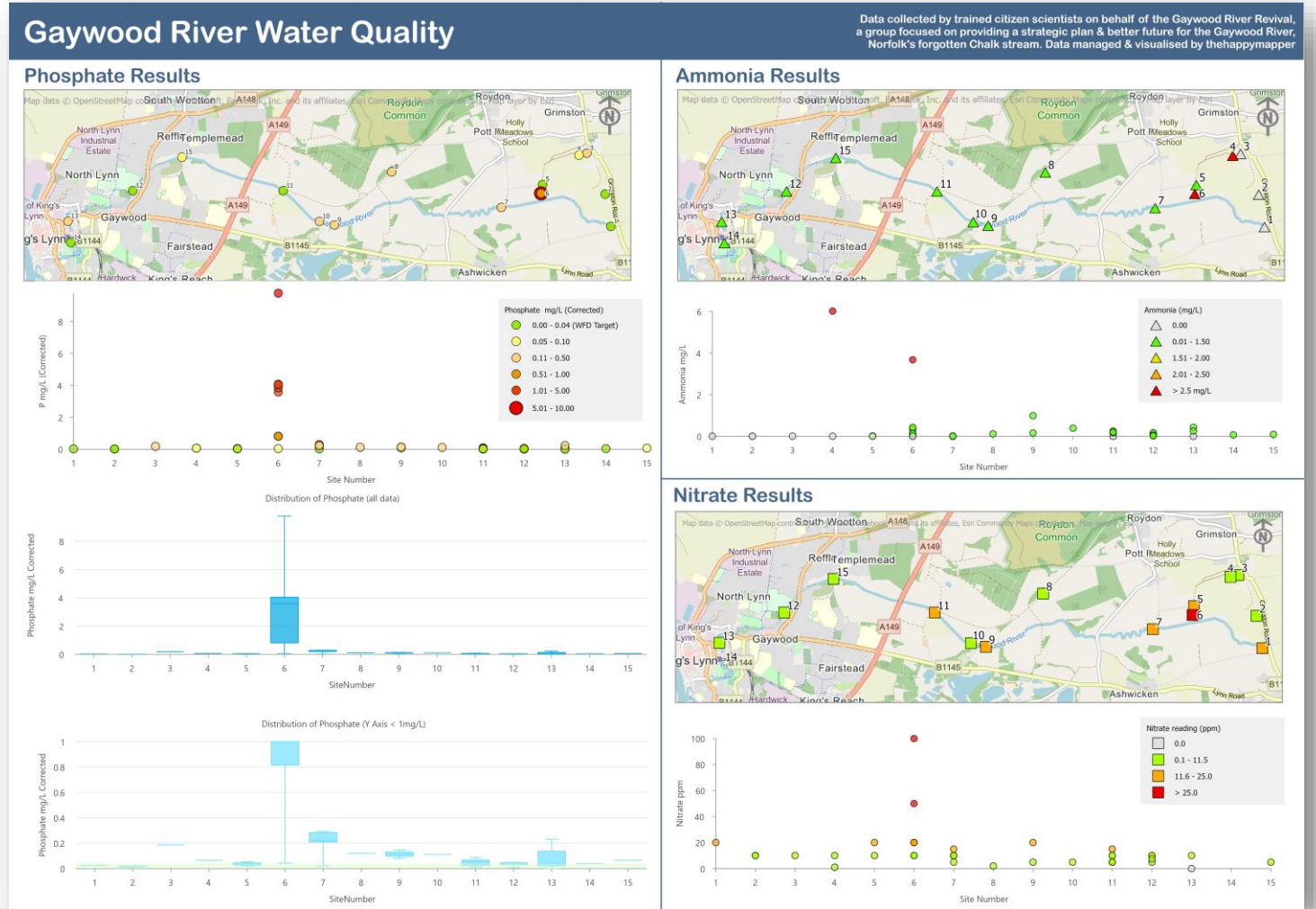


# CITIZEN SCIENCE

Over a year ago several committed citizen scientists began testing the water quality in the Gaywood.

The testing regime for Phosphate has been independently verified as correlating with the Environment Agency tests and the results are not good.

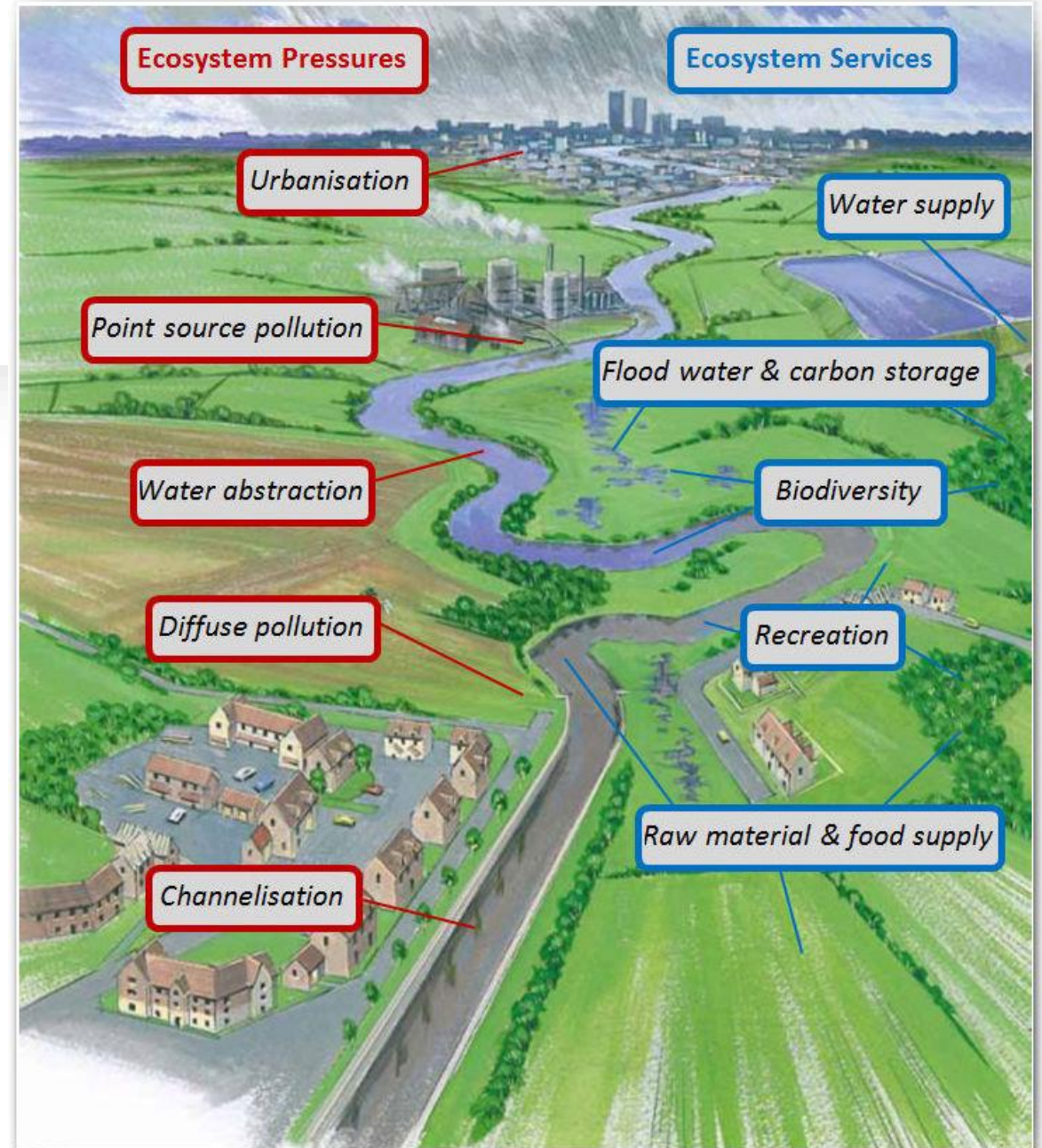
There are several point sources of Phosphate within the catchment affecting water quality and further investigation is critical



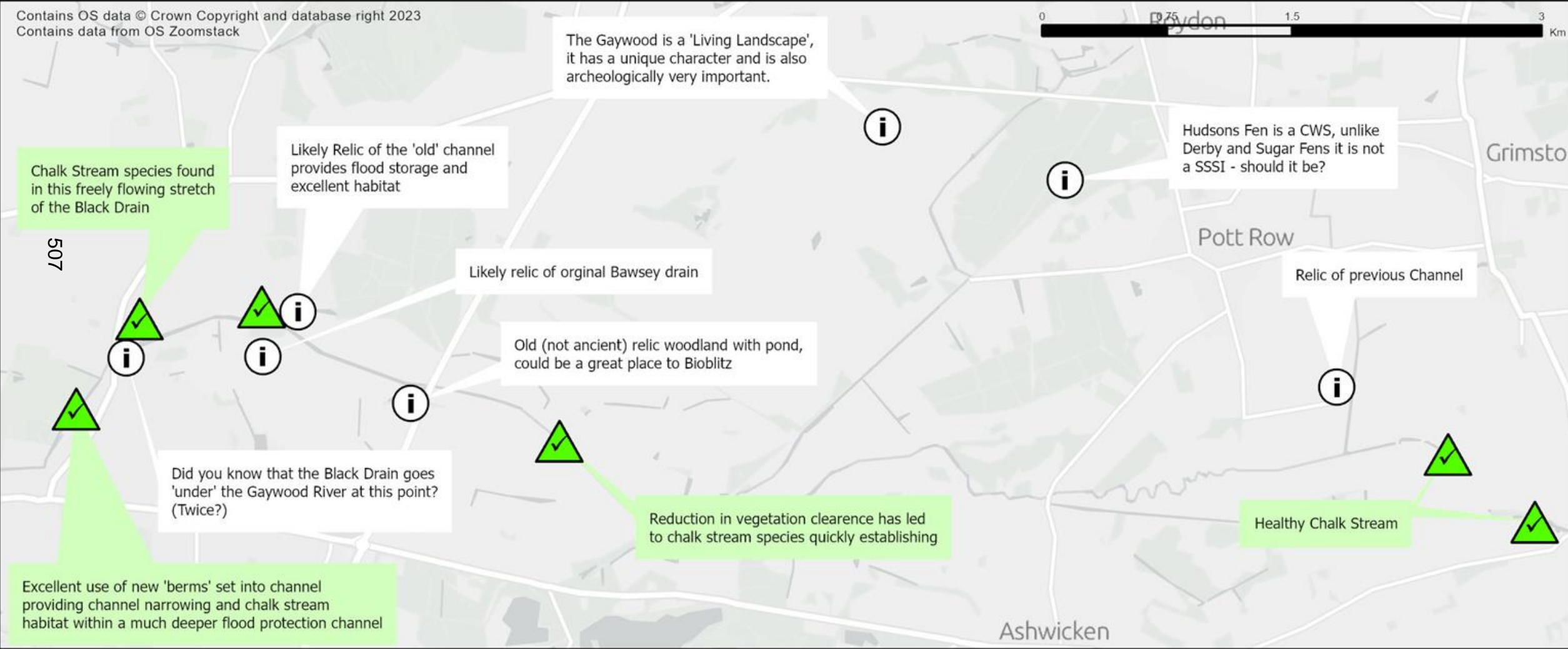


# THE GAYWOOD CATCHMENT DATABASE

- Created in 2011 to collate data on the ecosystem services in the rural and urban landscape.
- The datasets were used to assess stakeholder engagement with their surroundings, map paleochannels, and map ecological connectivity /within the landscape
- Using more advanced geospatial tools visualisations of future landscapes were also created with stakeholders
- Regularly updated with a wide range of data it is now a powerful tool containing information on habitat condition, water quality and opportunities for improvement



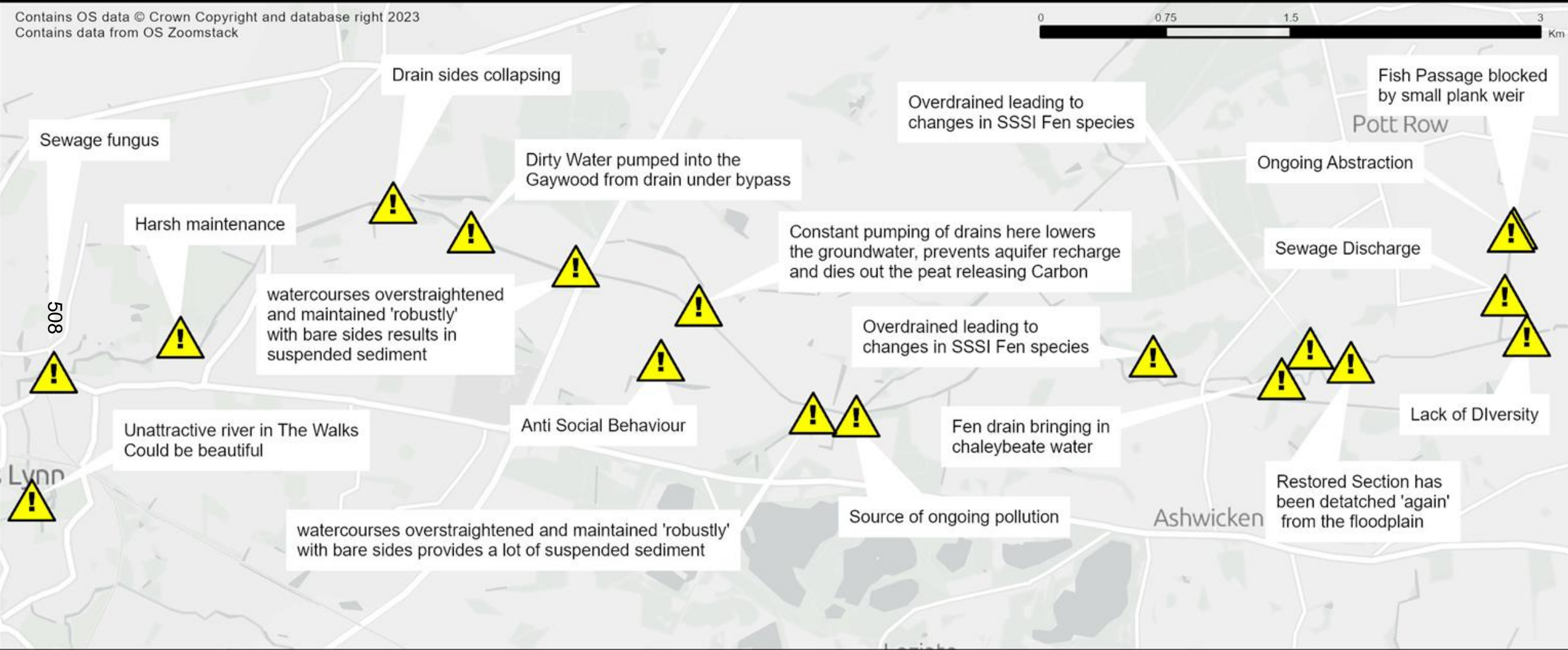
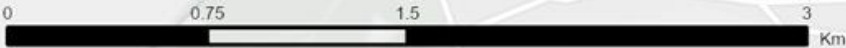
# NOT ALL OF THE CATCHMENT IS IN BAD CONDITION



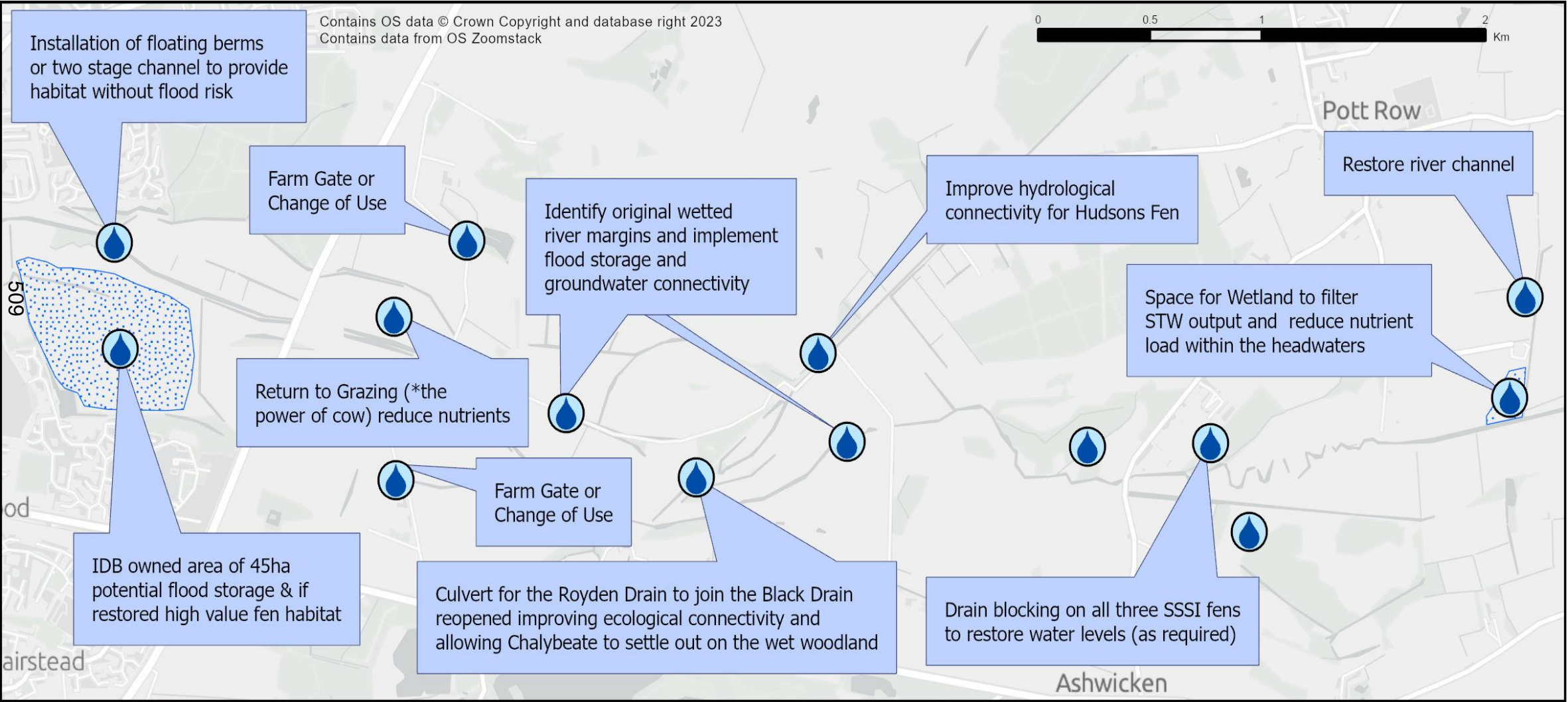


# SOME OF THE PROBLEMS

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# EXAMPLE - IDENTIFYING IMPROVEMENTS

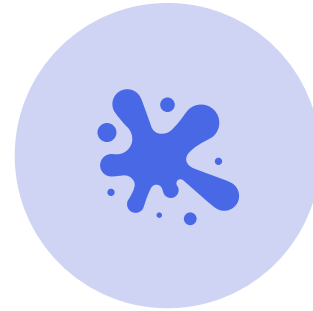




# THESE INTERVENTIONS COULD ACHIEVE THE FOLLOWING



- Improved biodiversity along the river corridors



- Improved water quality (colour and chemical)

510



- Greater resilience to ever-increasing rainfall events and reduced flood risk



- Improved benefits to the community





511

# LOOKING FORWARD



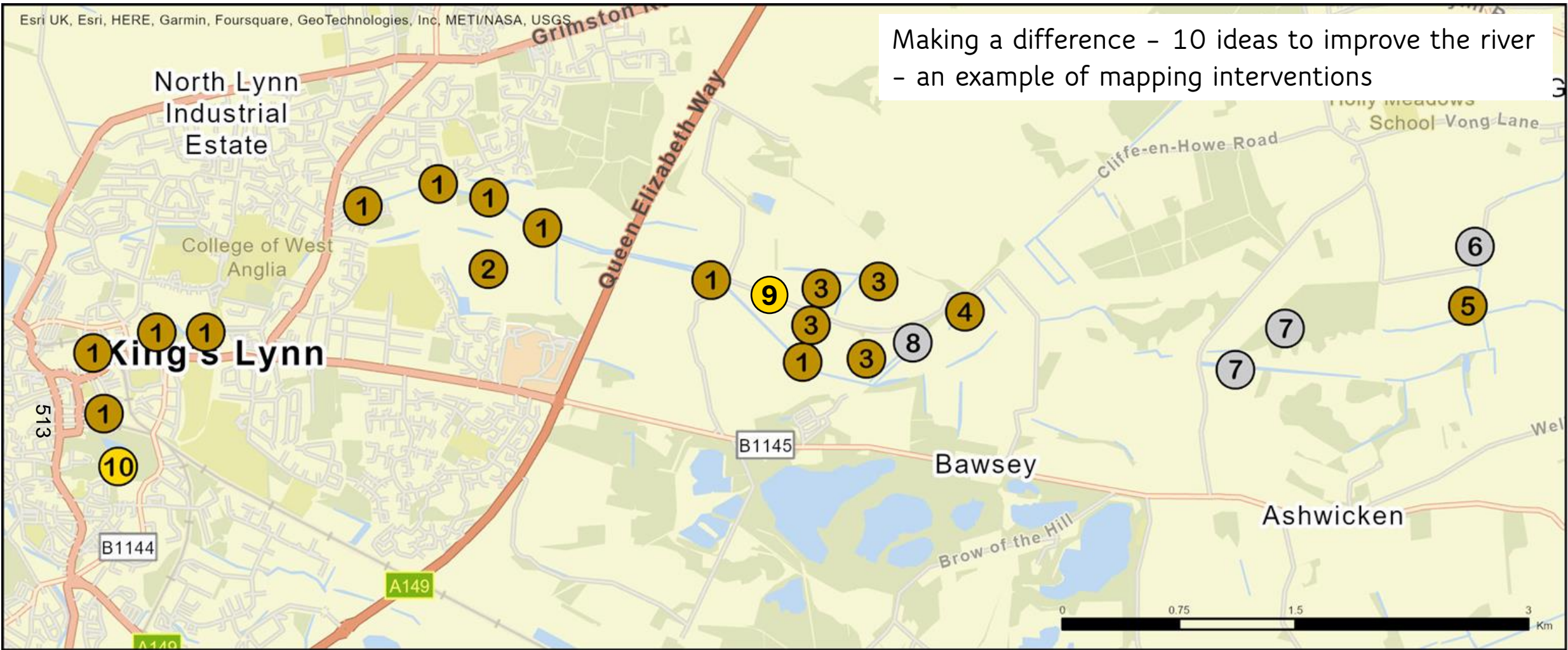


512

## WHAT CAN KLWNBC DO?

1. Support the creation of a catchment group which involves all the stakeholders in the catchment, the issues and the possible solutions to create a short-, medium- and long-term plan for this unique landscape
2. A major barrier to river and habitat improvements has been the complexity of the catchment and the flood risk to Kings Lynn of changes to the river - flood modelling is a necessity and any assistance in funding this report would unlock opportunities
3. Fund additional citizen science water testing kits to collect better resolution data on the water health of the river
4. Support a catchment scale Bio Blitz to establish the presence of species within the area and assess habitat restoration locations

Making a difference - 10 ideas to improve the river - an example of mapping interventions



**Bronze:** 🏆

- 1. Change maintenance to allow chalk river to flow and floating berms to be placed in channel where river is impounded and no vegetation
- 2. Rewet the fens at springwood (flood storage)
- 3. Scrapes at Bawsey on fields to formalise the wetted areas (aquifer connectivity)
- 4. Silt traps on Roydon drain
- 5. Wetland below Sewage Treatment Works

**Silver** 🏆

- All of the above but with;
- 6. remeandered section above stw
- 7. additional drain blocking on sugar and Leziate fens with reconstruction of the hydrological regime and reintroduction of species
- 8. Roydon drain placed in culvert under bridge again and connected to black drain which will have its own habitat restoration of scrapes (flood storage)

**Gold** 🏆

- 9. All above but with channel reconstruction along entire length from Bawsey train line to the springwood cycle bridge. Below cycle bridge in channel two stage berms to allow for habitat and flood protection right down to the walks.
- 10. dipping platform in the walks and new display boards celebrating the return of iconic chalk stream species



Top L: The Wandle in London, Top R the Dour in Dover,  
Bottom L: The River Misbourne  
Bottom R The Great Stour in Canterbury,



514  
THANK YOU  
FOR  
LISTENING

14<sup>th</sup> November 2023 BCKLWN

# Norfolk Net Zero Communities



UK Research and Innovation



Innovate UK





# The Project

2 year Innovate UK  
funded project  
delivered through  
Norfolk Climate  
Change Partnership

## **Citizen Preparedness - unlocking demand through tackling non-technical barriers :**

- Selecting cross section of Norfolk communities (7)
- Engagement and building relationships
- Creating a network of communities
- Finding the barriers
- Co-producing solutions
- Testing solutions
- Sharing learning
- Relating to place and people

## **Clean Growth – connecting & developing local economy**

- Engaging local relevant businesses
- Connecting demand to supply
- Encouraging more supply
- Helping supply be part of solutions

# Approach

517 Finding the right options for people and the place they live in, at the right times and in the right form to make the net zero transition work for them and their community

- ‘calling-in’ not ‘calling-out’
- ‘with’ not ‘to’
- Innovating
- Positive agenda around co-benefits
- Making the right options easier



# Value

518

- Better informed and more accepted local plans
- Increasing scale of action and reducing emissions
- Involving communities in climate and energy agenda
- Improve equity and outcomes in Net Zero transition
- Addressing local and households needs
- Tailored and targeted messaging and support
- Making best use of funding and finance
- Preparing local communities and economy

# Project Governance and Delivery

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- Day-day work is led by Project Manager and delivered through the Norfolk Climate Change Partnership with your local authority
- Project has a Steering Group and Advisory group to provide guidance & expertise
- Project is connecting with key community support, public health, warm homes and voluntary sector organisations and initiatives
- Project has support of Innovate UK Programme and is connected to national network
- The community engagement & co-production will be delivered through additional expertise in partnership with stakeholders

# Community Selection Process

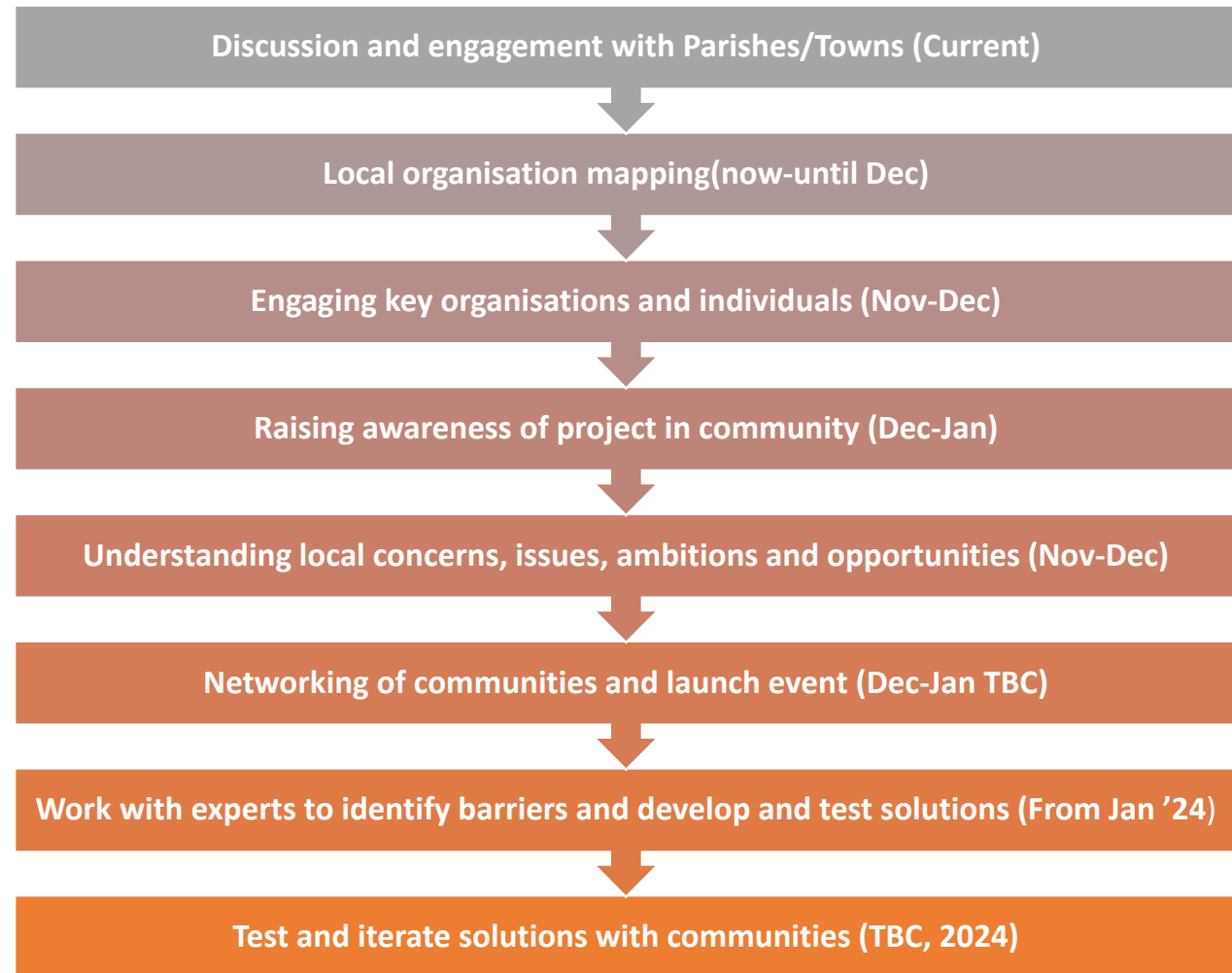
Communities that provides a good cross section of Norfolk population, housing, transport, planning, economic and community and household circumstances

One community in each of the 7 Norfolk districts, chosen by each Council with support from the project.

Decisions informed by analysis and consultation, generally across 4 themes:

- **Communities & households**
- **Routes to engagement**
- **Carbon reduction Potential**
- **Alignment to local Priorities**

## Next steps



# Contact details

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