

Date: August 2019 - March 2022

Location: Upper Weaver Catchment

Funding: Water Environment Grant as part of the Rural Development Programme for England

Background

Working in partnership, the Mersey Rivers Trust, Severn Rivers Trust and United Utilities used funding from the Water Environment Grant to help protect and improve the water quality in the Upper Weaver, Cheshire. Six sub-catchments in this area were chosen due to their moderate to poor Water Framework Directive status. Farms in the catchments were provided with free advice, water quality management plans and small grants to implement the water quality improvement measures identified in the plans.



Project

- **August 2019:** contacted farms within priority areas in the catchment to offer advice visits
- **December 2019:** first farm water management plans written and first interventions carried out
- **March 2020:** 'Pie and Pint' evening held and 20 more farmers engaged in project
- **March - August 2020:** project halted due to Covid-19
- **September - December 2020:** project starts back up, more farm water management plans written and further interventions funded
- **January - March 2021:** project halted due to Covid-19
- **April 2021 - February 2022:** 80 farm water management plans written, interventions carried out at 40 farms
- **March 2022:** project completed!

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Key stats



80 water
management
plans written

40 farms committed
to works with funded
interventions



Over £150k of
funding provided
to farms



Outcomes

- **Yard works:** to separate clean and dirty water and reduce foul drainage runoff and the risk of water pollution
- **Gateway/crossing point resurfacing:** to prevent erosion and reduce the risk of water pollution from surface runoff
- **Fencing:** to prevent livestock entering water courses, reducing erosion of banks and soil runoff
- **Livestock:** interventions to provide livestock with drinking sources alternative to the watercourse in order to reduce bank erosion, runoff and water pollution from faecal contamination and mobilised sediments
- **Tree and hedge planting:** to reduce soil erosion and runoff and extend or link existing hedgerow to create wildlife corridors
- **Soil management:** aeration, sward lifting, arable subsoiling and the provision of winter cover crops and undersown cereal crops to ensure that the more productive topsoil remains in fields and reduce runoff, soil erosion and water pollution