



## Living Waters for Wales

Welcome to the first Dee River Basin District Newsletter – an insight into what’s happening

### What is River Basin Planning?

The water environment is a precious resource that must be protected. The European Water Framework Directive (2000) (WFD) provides the starting point for the river basin planning process.

In Wales, there are three River Basin Districts (RBD): Western Wales, Dee and the Severn, each has its own River Basin Management Plan (RBMP). The first River Basin Management Plans for England and Wales (RBMP) (2009-2015) were published on the 22 December 2009. These can be viewed at; [www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wfd](http://www.environment-agency.gov.uk/wfd)



Figure 1 shows the geographical area for the Dee Plan. This RBD has been divided into three catchments details of these are given in the main document.



Figure 1 – Dee RBD

### Who We Are?

The Environment Agency Wales is the publicly funded Government Body responsible for the development of the RBMPs for Welsh Assembly Government. Delivery of the actions in the plan to improve our water environment will include everyone with an involvement or interest in water.

If you have particular ideas, concerns or comments to make on the Dee RBMP you can contact us at; <mailto:deerbd@environment-agency.gov.uk>



## What We Are Doing?

As part of the development of the first RBMP we ran a 6-month consultation between December and June 2008 to publicise and encourage responses to the plans. The results of this process were published and can be found at <http://wfdconsultation.environment-agency.gov.uk/wfdcms/en/dee/Intro.aspx>

A series of workshops were held to discuss the RBMP. Of the many comments raised access to information was highlighted. Many felt that the RBMP was too big and it was difficult to find local information within the Plan.

It is intended that this Newsletter will provide informative updates on progress with implementation of the RBMP and be a vehicle to share information on what's happening across the Dee RBD.

It will be produced biannually and each Newsletter will include 'Local Initiatives' to provide detail on what's happening at a more local level.

Do you have any comments to raise or have any projects that you are involved in to improve the waters in the Dee RBD? If so please let us know at: <mailto:deerb@environment-agency.gov.uk>

We will also be producing an easy to use guide to help everyone navigate through the detail of the RBMP, this will be included with the next Newsletter in July.



We have been following up many issues that were raised during the consultation. One issue raised at all workshops was that of Invasive Non-Native Species (INNS) in Wales. Prevention and where possible eradication of INNS is important to protect and improve our habitats and river quality.

Because of the feedback we had, in December, we discussed these issues with the Wales Biodiversity Partnership Group – Wales Invasive Non- Native Species group. We will continue to work with this group to link the actions in the RBMP with the work that the group is delivering for INNS here in Wales. Further information is available at;

[http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/sq\\_meetings-130.aspx#TaskGroupsEng](http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/sq_meetings-130.aspx#TaskGroupsEng)

And the INNS group actions audit can be seen at;

<http://www.biodiversitywales.org.uk/content/uploads/documents/SG%20Meeting%20TaskFinish/INNS/INNS%20Actions%20Audit%2008%20Jan%202010%20clean.pdf>



### About the Dee RBD

The Dee River Basin District is home to over 500,000 people and covers an area of 2,251 square kilometres of North East Wales, Cheshire, Shropshire and the Wirral. It ranges from the mountains and lakes of the Snowdonia National Park in the upper part of the basin, through the Vale of Llangollen in the middle reaches, to the open plains of Cheshire and the mudflats of the Dee Estuary in the lower basin.

The Dee and its tributaries are renowned for their excellent fishing and there is an important cockle fishery in the estuary. The River Dee and Llyn Tegid are designated as a Special Area of Conservation (SAC) under the Habitats Directive. The Dee estuary is designated a Special Protection Area (SPA), RAMSAR site and SAC

### Local Initiatives



An example of the Dee Rivers Trust future planned projects at Hirnant.

Following a very productive joint meeting with EA fishery staff, in November, the trust is hoping to submit bids to fund further habitat improvement for juvenile salmonids on Upper Dee tributaries, starting with the lower Hirnant. Upper Dee spawning tributaries are those used by early running "spring" salmon and it is this population that has declined substantially in recent years.

The area earmarked on the Hirnant, would be adjacent to, and just upstream, of a recently completed Environment Agency habitat scheme. This area has been used extensively by spawning fish in recent years. The aim would be to increase juvenile salmonid survival. This section already benefits from bank side fencing. In-river habitat is to be improved using both additional rock clusters and large woody debris to provide cover. Low profile stone weirs will enhance the creation of pools and riffles.

Other areas being considered, for similar habitat improvement, are on the Little Dee and the Meloch

### River Alyn Himalayan Balsam Project Photo by Kate Taylor





The management of Himalayan Balsam in the Alyn catchment (The River Alyn flows into the River Dee) provides a positive example of organisations working together to deliver environmental benefits to watercourses. Local volunteer groups, highlighted the rapid advance of Himalayan Balsam in the Alyn catchment and a pilot project was set up to control and eradicate this non-native invasive species from the area.

The project brought together a variety of partners including Environment Agency Wales, the Countryside Council for Wales, Clwydian Range AONB Partnership, local authorities, Keep Wales Tidy, North Wales Wildlife Trust, Friends of Alyn Valley Woods, Cacwn Working Group, Llanferres Conservation Group and NEWWildlife.

A systematic, survey-based approach to tackling the issue, from the source of the River Alyn to Mold, was required to ensure the successful control and eradication of Himalayan Balsam in the Alyn catchment. Volunteers from all sectors including school groups and corporate volunteers physically removed the Himalayan Balsam from the riverbanks, contributing over 850 hours of labour to the project.

### How Can You Get Involved?

We can all do our bit to ensure that the water environment is protected and enhanced for future generations. If you would like to be involved and help us shape the future of your water environment, then contact us at the email address below.

Alternatively here are some things you can do to individually to ensure that water is valued and used sustainably. These actions are detailed on page 25 of the Dee RBMP at:

<http://wfdconsultation.environment-agency.gov.uk/wfdcms/en/dee/Intro.aspx>

### Next Newsletter July 2010

Our second Newsletter will feature more 'Local Initiatives' so please feedback any actions/activities you have been involved in or will be involved in over the coming months.

In addition, as mentioned above we will produce a RBMP Navigational Guide and a guide to navigate around the 'what's in your backyard' page on our website.

### Contacts

**For more information contact;**

**Ceri Jones, Dee River Basin District Programme Manager**  
**Lynda Bigland, WFD Principal Officer**  
**Jill Brown, Communications Officer**  
**Helen Millband, WFD Area coordinator**

<mailto:deerbd@environment-agency.gov.uk>