

Project Case Study



Litter & debris strewn over the banks of the River Darwen at Hoghton Bottoms



Volunteers regularly clean the River Darwen at Hoghton Bottoms



43 fly-tipped tyres were reported to the Environment Agency on 11th May 2007



Rt Hon Jack Straw MP attended the media launch on 8th June 2007

Name: River Darwen Litter Trap Project

Project Location and Watercourse: Blackburn, River Darwen

Start Date: February 2007 **End Date:** March 2010

Project Value: £161,535 over 3 years

Partners Involved:

Environment Agency
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
APEM Ltd, OPEC Ltd & EDS Ltd

Sources of Funding:

Cash:

Peter Moores Foundation £50,000
Biffaward £43,771
Environment Agency £15,000
Healthy Waterways Trust £5,000
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council £2,694

In Kind:

Local communities & volunteers
Environment Agency
De Hoghton Estate
The Probation Service in Blackburn
United Utilities
BTCV
Blackburn with Darwen Borough Council
APEM Ltd, OPEC Ltd & EDS Ltd

Media Coverage:

- Lancashire Evening Telegraph, The Citizen (Blackburn, Darwen and Hyndburn) front page feature 7th June 2007
- 107 The Bee radio, Bury Times, www.web4water.com, www.edie.net 8th June 2007
- Environment Forum Newsletter 'Essence' Summer 2007
- BBC Radio Lancashire – 'Gilly' Show feature 22nd May 2007
- Lancashire Evening Telegraph 1st December 2006
- Chorley Guardian 28th March 2007
- The Shuttle (January / February 2007)
- United Utilities ONE+ magazine
- Source NW magazine

Contact Details:

Sarah Whitman
Action Darwen Valley Project Co-ordinator
Tel: 01772 877392
Email: s.whitman@merseybasin.org.uk
BLOG: <http://blogs.merseybasin.org.uk>

Project Case Study



A floating boom deflects debris in the water to a collection 'skip' in the river.

Name: River Darwen Litter Trap Project

What is the litter trap? The litter trap consists of a floating boom, which deflects floating litter and debris into a steel cage that can be lifted out from the river to be emptied. The trap is designed to cope with all but the largest items of waterborne waste.

Why does the River Darwen need a litter trap? Litter and debris from upstream are a major problem and eyesore on the lower reaches of the River Darwen. Every year voluntary groups work tirelessly to remove litter from places like Hoghton Bottoms, Higher Walton, River Darwen Parkway, Witton Country Park and Higher Croft Woods, all of which need regular attention to prevent litter dropped by litterbugs from being washed down the river and ending up snagged on the riverbank, ruining the natural beauty of the area. The amount of rubbish being taken out from the river is not decreasing, so Action Darwen Valley and its partners decided to tackle the problem upstream.



The basket is removed and emptied (much of the waste removed can be recycled).

Where is the trap and why? The litter trap has been installed at Witton Country Park (Blackburn) in the River Darwen, just downstream of its confluence with the River Blakewater, which is mainly culverted beneath Blackburn. Most of the floating litter comes from the River Blakewater, which is why the litter trap has been installed where it meets the main River Darwen. Witton Country Park is well used by the general public and the trap itself is close to the main car park, making it very noticeable to people who visit the park.



A trap door prevents debris escaping from the boom when the basket is removed

Prevention is better than cure. The amount and type of litter and debris removed from the trap will provide valuable information for use in tracing the source of problems upstream. Work with schools and with the local community will help to spread the main message :

'Litter and debris belong in the bin not in the River Darwen'

Background. Plans for a litter trap first emerged in the 1990s. Following an Environment Agency feasibility study in 2004, Action Darwen Valley has been bringing together partners to fund and deliver the project.

Implementation. Action Darwen Valley appointed APEM Ltd to undertake the litter trap installation, which involved part of the River Darwen being drained to allow safe working and to prevent damage to the river water during installation of the trap. Specialist contractors OPEC and EDS Diving Services installed the litter trap. Construction work on the litter trap began in November 2006. Adverse weather delayed the works, but the trap was finally completed in February 2007.



Puppets made from junk at the community launch on 13th May 2007

Trailblazing. The specially imported £88,000 litter trap on the River Darwen is the first of its kind in the UK.