

The Suffolk Coastal Catchment – Local Choices Announcement

October 2017

Local Choices

The Suffolk Coastal catchment has been identified as one experiencing multiple pressures that are causing its rivers to generally be in a poor condition. As a result, we have chosen the Suffolk Coastal catchment as one of four catchments in East Anglia to focus its attention on. These catchments are referred to as Local Choices, and are characterised by issues around diffuse pollution, redundant in-stream structures, habitat scarcity and poor water quality. To tackle these pressures we have appointed two officers who will be working with partners to deliver projects and find solutions within the Suffolk Coastal catchment.

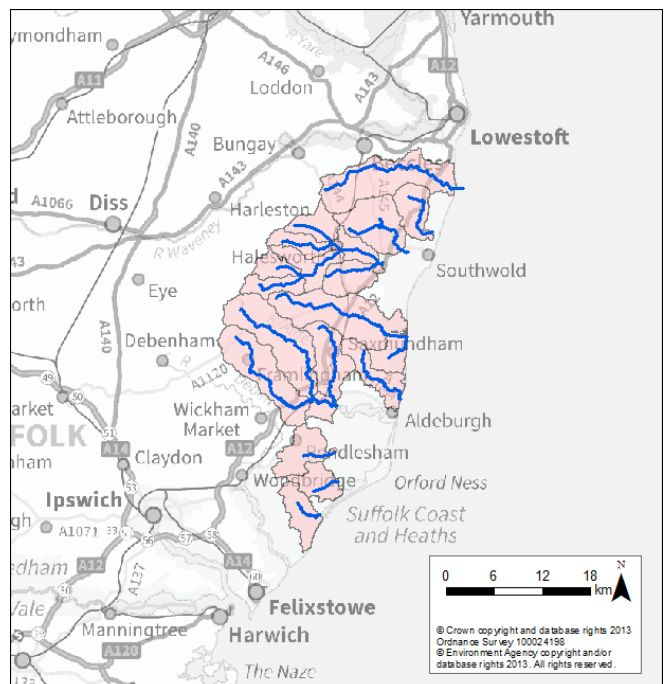
Catchment Overview

The Suffolk Coastal catchment covers an area of 763 km² and includes the rivers Fromus, Alde, Ore, Blyth and Butley. The catchment is overwhelmingly rural and dominated by arable agriculture, with notable market towns in Framlingham (River Ore), Saxmundham (River Fromus) and Halesworth (River Blyth).

Hydrologically many of the catchments are small and although groundwater accounts for approximately half of river flow, rainfall is necessary to maintain river water levels.

Geologically the Suffolk Coastal catchment is broadly split along the A12. To the west are the claylands, which typically contain cereal crops and routinely experience low flow conditions during summer months. To the east are the sandlings, which contain light, permeable soils ideal for root vegetables. The geology helps define the river characteristics, which are also different upstream and downstream of the A12. At their downstream limit many of the rivers in the Suffolk Coastal catchment discharge through tidal flats set into artificial embankments.

In Water Framework Directive terms, 76% of the rivers were failing to meet good status in the baseline year of 2015. The dominant causes for failure are fish, channel shape and phosphate, with some stretches failing for dissolved oxygen, invertebrates and macrophytes. Abstraction is also an identified issue and the rivers in Suffolk Coastal are under pressure from increasing demand and reduced water availability.



A map of the Suffolk Coastal catchment.

What we're doing

- Visiting farms to discuss best practice with respect to land use and water management
- Physically delivering projects that create habitat within rivers for the benefit of wildlife
- Identifying and tackling point sources for pollution and agricultural runoff
- Implementing schemes to excite and engage communities about their local rivers

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- Promoting our work through facilitation groups and workshops within the catchment
- Seeking landowners who are interested in improving the environment on their land
- Finding redundant in-stream structures that serve no purpose and removing them wherever possible
- Engaging with local communities to talk about their vision for rivers in the Suffolk Coastal catchment
- Joining up our internal processes to communicate a clear and holistic approach to water management for the Suffolk Coastal catchment

How you can help

We're actively looking for landowners and farmers within the Suffolk Coastal catchment who own land adjoining rivers. We're seeking opportunities to deliver projects on the ground that benefit wildlife and the rural community. We're also looking to speak at local events and engage with communities at every level. If you can facilitate any of the above or if you have any questions about what our work means for you, then please do contact our catchment officers.

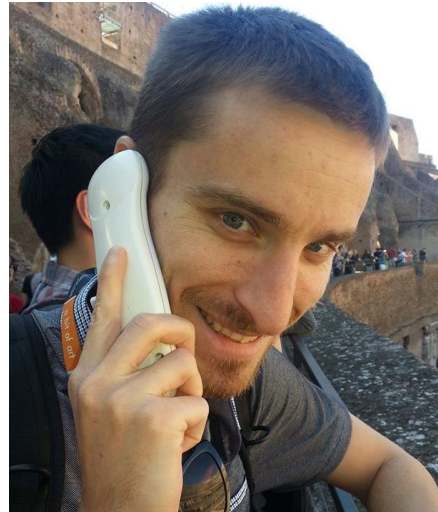
The Catchment Officers



Nicola Robinson (nicola.robinson@environment-agency.gov.uk) – agricultural good practice and diffuse pollution lead

Nic has worked at the Environment Agency for twelve years, initially on the Catchment Sensitive

Farming project and more recently working with partners to deliver projects to improve the water environment. Nic trained as a soil scientist, and is keen to work with farm managers to demonstrate the wider environmental benefits of good land management. Contact Nic on 07900 135508.



Trevor Bond (trev.bond@environment-agency.gov.uk) – habitat improvement and structure removal lead

Trev has worked at the Environment Agency for the past five years and has helped deliver numerous river-related projects across East Anglia during this time. Trained as a geomorphologist, Trev specialises in using natural processes to change the physical shape of rivers for the benefit of people and wildlife. You can follow Trev on Twitter using the handle [@TrevBondEA](https://twitter.com/TrevBondEA), or you can ring him on 07584 616 246.

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