

River habitat improvement by tree management

2017



Our rivers throughout the **Frome, Piddle and West Dorset** have a big mix of tree dominance. Many areas with heavy tree cover require management to keep the fishing accessible. This is also useful in preventing large overgrowth resulting in tree falls which in turn cause flooding, localised bank damage and sediment loss. Tree limbing techniques can be used to create instream woody habitats for fish and other wildlife. Also, light can then regenerate weed growth on riffles which provides cover and food for **fish and wildlife**. This is often best done on 5 yearly routines or more frequent if required.

During 2017 **six** sites across the region were selected based on being overgrown and in need of low instream cover. Sites ranged from 400m – 1000m, **totalling over 5km of improved river**. They can be seen on the map and are spread across our rivers. During low water detailed field visits and plans were made for trees along each stretch which would be worked on. This was then checked for felling licence compliance. No obstructions or placement of in river fixings were to be made. Work was undertaken at the appropriate times of year i.e. winter/autumn, with sensitive areas taken into consideration.

The overall impact has been great with increased fishing in the areas and **masses more instream cover** for fish. Birds now have access to increased scrubby nesting habitats along the edges. Small regrowth has occurred blending work beautifully in to the landscape. Some across channel blockages have been cut back to suit and stop bank damage due to scouring. On some sites this will have **aided fish migrations**.

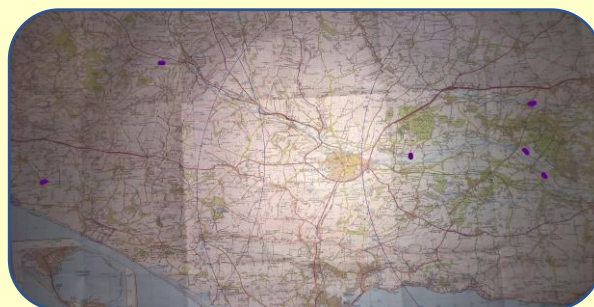


Tremendous amount of habitat improved.

Good finish and well targeted.



Low cost and many thanks to voluntary support.



Dominic Stubbing
February 2018