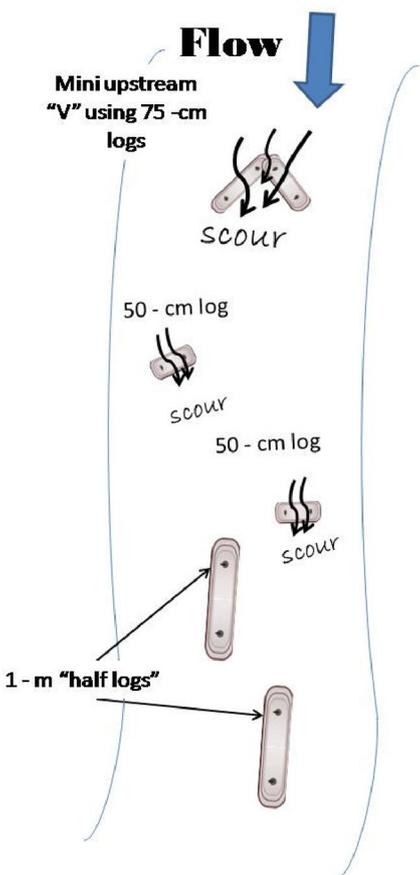


# Help us to restore the upper Wandle

**Next spring will see the start of major improvement works on the river at Carshalton – and we are looking for volunteers to help the process, as Bella Davies explains**



The diagram shows how flow deflectors and logs will be installed in the river to help improve the habitat for wildlife

Here at the Wandle Trust, we're looking forward to 2011 with excitement and anticipation, because it heralds an important new phase of river enhancement work on the Wandle.

For quite some time we have been working together with the Wild Trout Trust (WTT) and the Environment Agency (EA) to develop a project in the river's headwaters, part-financed by the Thames Water Habitat Fund, to begin to reinstate the upper Wandle as the famous trout fishery that it once was. The project is made up of several components including, ultimately, the reintroduction of a population of wild 'urban-adapted' brown trout, and the project will benefit many other species as well.

The first phase will be focused upstream of Butter Hill Mill in Carshalton, where the headwaters of the Wandle were isolated from the remainder of the river by a large weir installed hundreds of years ago: there has certainly been a mill on this site since 1620 and possibly even as far back as 1300. The current weir was installed to create a drop of 1.5m over which water would fall and drive the wheels of the adjacent mills. Although most of the mills were abandoned at the end of the

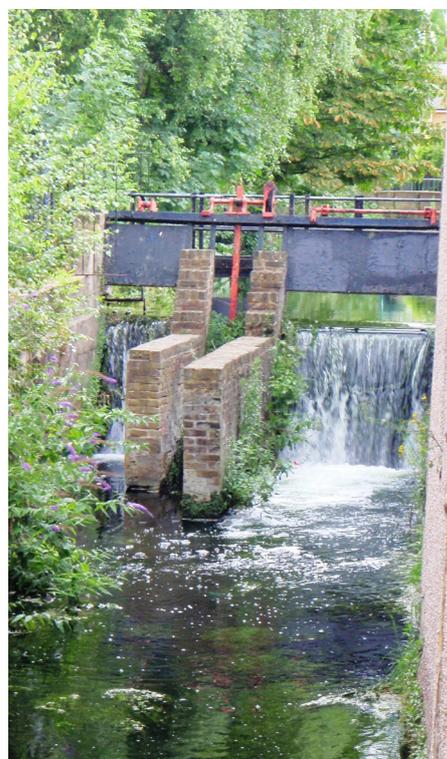


photo: The Wandle Trust; diagram: Paul Gaskell

**Above: the weir at Butter Hill Mill used to hold a water wheel in each of the two wider gaps**

19th century, the large weir remains presenting a 1.5m high barrier to any wildlife that tries to move upstream in the Wandle.

Such obstructions present a big problem to much of the Wandle's wildlife, particularly species which migrate during their life cycle such as trout, eels and some coarse fish. Trout tend to move upstream to spawning and nursery grounds in a river's headwaters, while

*continued overleaf*

# Don't take it for granted

## Erica Evans looks at different ways to cut your water bill

Water is often taken for granted in the UK, with each of us expecting a plentiful supply every time we turn on the tap.

But water is becoming more precious than ever, with the impacts of climate change and rising demand for water putting increasing pressure on our water resources. Changes in the way we live, including more power showers, dishwashers, washing machines and smaller households, mean we use more water per day. On average, each person uses 160 litres a day compared to 140 in the 1980s.

It's easy to forget that using water also uses electricity to treat, pump and heat it. So saving water can save energy too.

Water-saving habits started now will become a way of life for the future. See the article opposite on how Linden Lodge undertook a water-saving week.

Thames Water's Top Ten Tips for saving water are:

### Turn off the tap when brushing your teeth

A running tap uses up to six litres of water a minute

### Take showers not baths

This can save over 300 litres a week, but power showers may use more water than a bath

### Put a save-a-flush in your toilet cistern

Saves one litre per flush

### Fully load your washing machine

A full load uses less water than two half loads

### Keep a jug of water in the fridge

So there's no need to run the tap until the water is cold

### Don't leave the tap running while washing dishes

Use a bowl of water instead

### Fix leaking taps

A leaking tap wastes 140 litres of water a week

### Order a water butt

Collect rainwater to use on your lawn and plants

### Use a bucket when you wash the car

This uses up to 125 litres less water than cleaning a car with a hosepipe

### Water your garden early morning or late evening

This helps to minimise evaporation from the soil

## Help us to restore the upper Wandle

*continued from page 1*

eels begin and end their life cycle out at sea, migrating up our rivers where they spend most of the duration of their lives. Coarse fish aren't seen as migratory in the same way as trout and eels but they do still move around a river, requiring the varied conditions offered by different areas at different times in their life cycle. Therefore, unimpeded access to a variety of conditions along the length of a river is needed for most fish species and this is what we and the EA are working towards with urgency.

The first stage in this project is aimed at improving the area upstream of the weir at Butter Hill Mill in preparation for trout and other species to inhabit. This will involve the EA gradually reducing the height of three small weirs to make them more pass-

able to various aquatic animals and restore a more natural flow to this area (weirs have the effect of impounding water, holding it back and slowing the flow so that some of the natural faster water movement is lost).

We will then install various flow deflectors and logs in the river, to a design produced by the WTT (part of which can be seen in the diagram on page 1).

Staff from the WTT will provide us with a 'Practical Visit' to show us all how to install the logs and deflectors which will diversify the water flow through this stretch, scouring out pools and cleaning the gravel bed ready for spawning trout. To do this, we will need the help of quite a number of volunteers.

We anticipate this volunteer event taking place over two days in

early 2011 (February/March time) so do keep an eye on the calendar page of our website [www.wandletrust.org](http://www.wandletrust.org) if you would like to get involved.

At around the same time, the EA plans to install a Larinier-type fish pass (which looks something like a sloping ladder) on the weir at Butter Hill Mill.

This will finally open up 500m of currently inaccessible river to a variety of fish species including brown trout, chub, dace and roach, and will reconnect the Wandle with one of its important headwaters. In due course, we also hope to extend these habitat improvements downstream from Butter Hill Mill.

*You can also help us at our regular cleanups on the second Sunday of each month. See [www.wandletrust.org](http://www.wandletrust.org) for details.*

# Singing to save water

**Our flagship ecological education project, Trout in the Classroom, has many environmental benefits – but we are always looking for new ways of reducing its carbon footprint. This year we ran a carbon balancing competition for the schools taking part. Karen Gardiner, from the winning school Linden Lodge, reports**

The brown trout arrived as eggs in January and were looked after for two half terms by Key Stage 3 students. Nobody liked removing the trout pool!

In total we estimated that we must have used up 81 litres of water with our Trout in the Classroom project. We decided that we wanted to get some of this back – and held a special water saving week to try and achieve this.

Some of the ideas we had for saving water are:

■ **Don't sing in the shower! You take longer. But a shower is much better than having a bath for saving water. Our slogan was 'Sing in the rain – not the shower!'**

■ **Use the dribble of water from the water cups to water the plants.**

■ **Recycle the old fish water – also very good for plants.**

All our water saving won us the Wandle Trust Carbon Footprint Prize 2010. We decided to put the money towards a specially commissioned tactile wall display of the life cycle of brown trout fish, to help our visually impaired students understand the process.

The display was created by Linda Marshal, an artist who has worked at Linden Lodge for many years supporting young people with a visual impairment. She has used this experience to produce a range of tactile pictures which bring life and meaning to children who have complex needs.

Linda is really inspirational in the



Left: Linden Lodge's new tactile panels by artist Linda Marshal show the life cycle of a trout in a way that can be appreciated through touch as well as sight.

The Wandle Trust Carbon Footprint Prize 2010 was very generously donated by Wandle Trust supporter Roger Stevens, who also gives a great deal of his time each year as a Trout in the Classroom volunteer

way she gives children tactile awareness and helps them navigate their world. When people visit the school they see children exploring their environment with her tactile references. Much of Linda's work is unique to Linden Lodge. She uses everyday materials in an imaginative and creative way and her use

of colour, shape and texture makes objects come alive which stimulates children to feel, touch and smell.

Thank you to everyone who took part in our water-saving week and helped us to win the Wandle Trust's carbon footprint prize.

## Spotted on the Wandle

Regular cleanup volunteer Rob Thorp spotted this rather unusual sight in the river recently...a tiny terrapin hitching a ride on a life belt. If you have an unusual Wandle sighting with a picture we could feature in Wandle News, get in touch with us via the website at [www.wandletrust.org](http://www.wandletrust.org).



# False teeth and rabbit hutches

**It's amazing what a varied assortment of objects a year's worth of river cleanups can yield, as Erica Evans reports**

In 2010, the International Year of Biodiversity, our monthly community cleanups continued to make the Wandle and its surroundings a better place for wildlife and local people. Thanks to the meticulous record keeping of Jo, Sally and Alice, we now have a comprehensive list of all the rubbish our wonderful, enthusiastic and hard working volunteers have pulled out of the Wandle since January.

As well as countless metres of plastic piping and metal tubing, we found lots of household items – toasters, kettles, saucepans, duvets, pillows, handbasins, toilets and baths. There were garden-related items too – lawnmowers, patio furniture, barbecues and wheelbarrows. Enough car parts were fished out of the water over the course of the year to rebuild an entire vehicle – bonnets, axles, steering wheels, batteries and windscreens. Children's toys featured regularly - radio controlled trucks, scooters and footballs. Once beloved action heroes were rescued from the chilly depths - Robocop, Superman, Spiderman, Wonder Woman, Action Man and Buzz Lightyear.

The Wandle itself contributed to our ongoing fundraising activities too, proffering three 'dye' security boxes for which we received a reward, and the contents of a safe found at Hackbridge which amounted to £17.62. In addition to pallets, buckets, suitcases, boilers, wheel clamps and watering cans, there were many, many tonnes of unidentifiable detritus.

Of the more puzzling single items on the list there were, for example, one Christmas tree, one line-marking machine; one basket ball post; one rabbit hutch; one bowling ball and one upper set of false teeth!

Thereafter, in ascending order, two

washing machines, three road signs, five motorbikes, seven computers, ten safes, 11 pushchairs, 19 mattresses, 45 shopping trolleys, 56 bicycles, 60 traffic cones, 71 carpets and an unbelievable 279 tyres. And of course, there's always a coconut!

Thanks to the Waste Management Teams of Merton, Sutton and Wandsworth for collecting and disposing of it for us - and of course, our incomparable volunteers. Well done everybody!



photos: Jane Porter



Our November cleanup saw the return to the river of Gordon the diver, who got thoroughly immersed in the water on a particularly cold and rainy day in search of some stubborn trolleys (above and below) and even found his own Mini-Me (left)

