RiverLife Project
Almond & Avon

FORTH
FISHERIES TRUST

Monitoring Success

What does project success look like?

What is success?
Is it;

- Number of barriers eased?
- Fishery enhanced – increased juvenile productivity / additional returning adults?
- Area of riverbank INNS sprayed?
- Number of awards received?
- Area of urban landscape restored?
- Length of eroding bank protected?

Is it;

- Number of volunteers completing accredited training courses (electrofishing and PA1/PA6AW spraying)
- Number of volunteers regularly helping with electrofishing
- Number of events attended with exhibition
- Number of untrained volunteers completing volunteer days
- Number of trained volunteers completing volunteer days
- Number of schools engaged with
- Number of members of the public engaged at events (e.g. Bioblitz)

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The answer is YES – all of the above

- Physical monitoring of biology/fisheries, riparian habitat, biodiversity, morphology, water quality, restoration

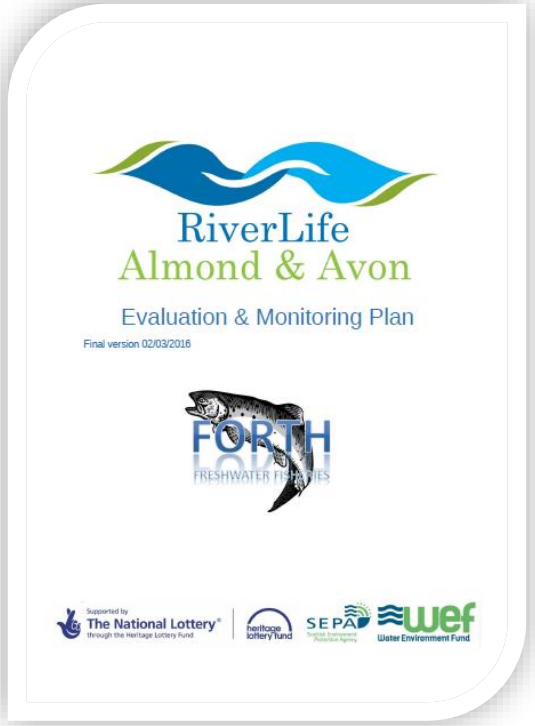
- People and communities engagement, learning and education, social benefit, intergenerational interaction, physical and mental health, skills and CV development, qualifications, getting into work

Why monitor project success?

- Funders want to know that their money is achieving what was promised at the outset
- Monitoring is appreciable chunk of project funding
- Board members and stakeholders want to know that we are running successful projects and achieving our fisheries management and education objectives
- We want to know if we are doing things correctly and if we need to change our approach
- Demonstrate and promote our success to attract future funding, followers, skills, good press
- Monitoring forces us to think about the multiple benefits of our projects and hence maximise the priorities that we can achieve
- Linking with other organisations and developing partnership working

Benefits of having an early monitoring strategy

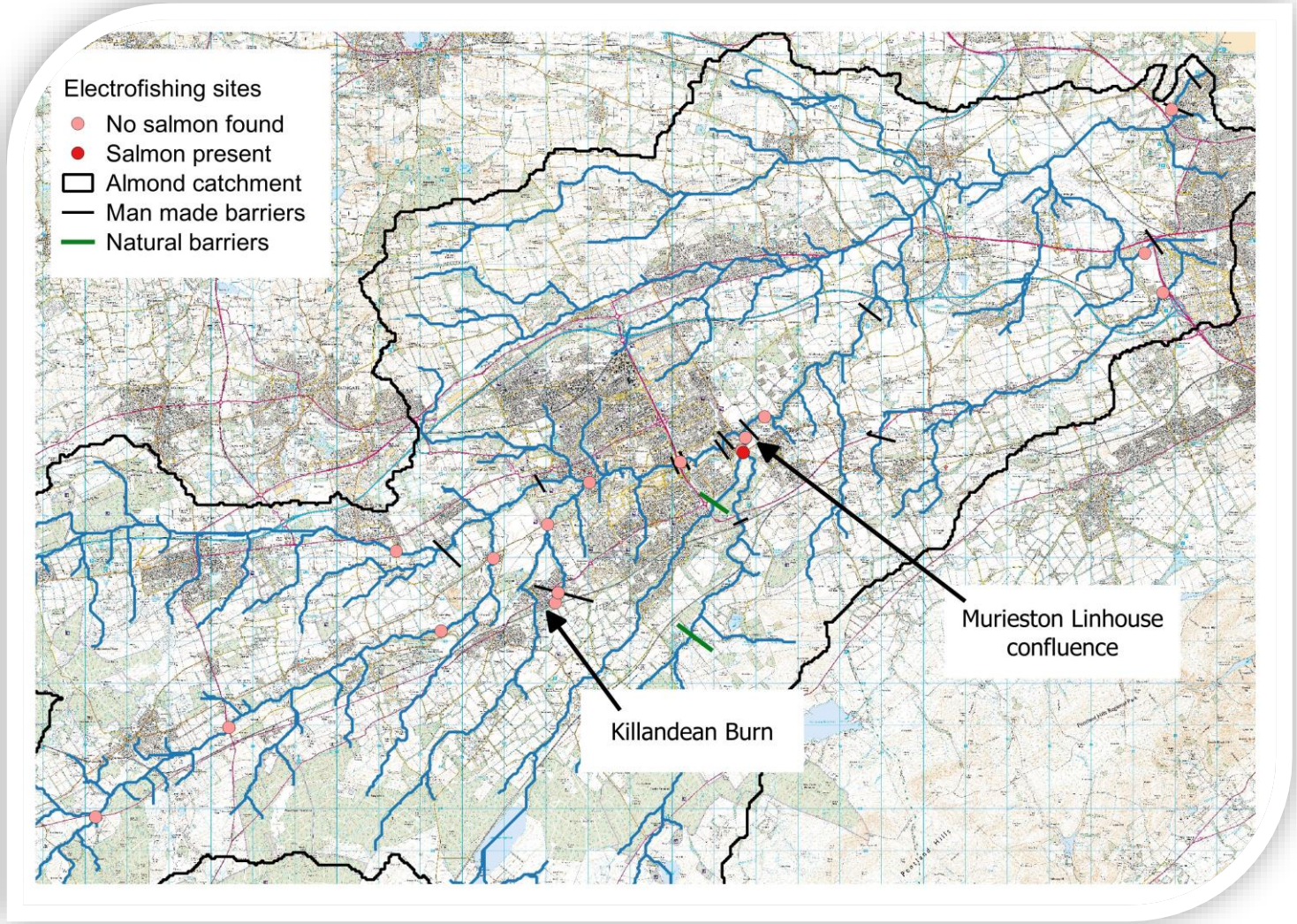
- Baseline will be established at the outset
- Work with research institutions and set up research partnerships
- Project objectives can be assessed properly
- Increase engagement with the outside world
- Developing volunteer network promotes ownership and hence sustainability beyond the four funded project years
- Cant proceed from development to delivery phases of HLF project without comprehensive monitoring and evaluation plan



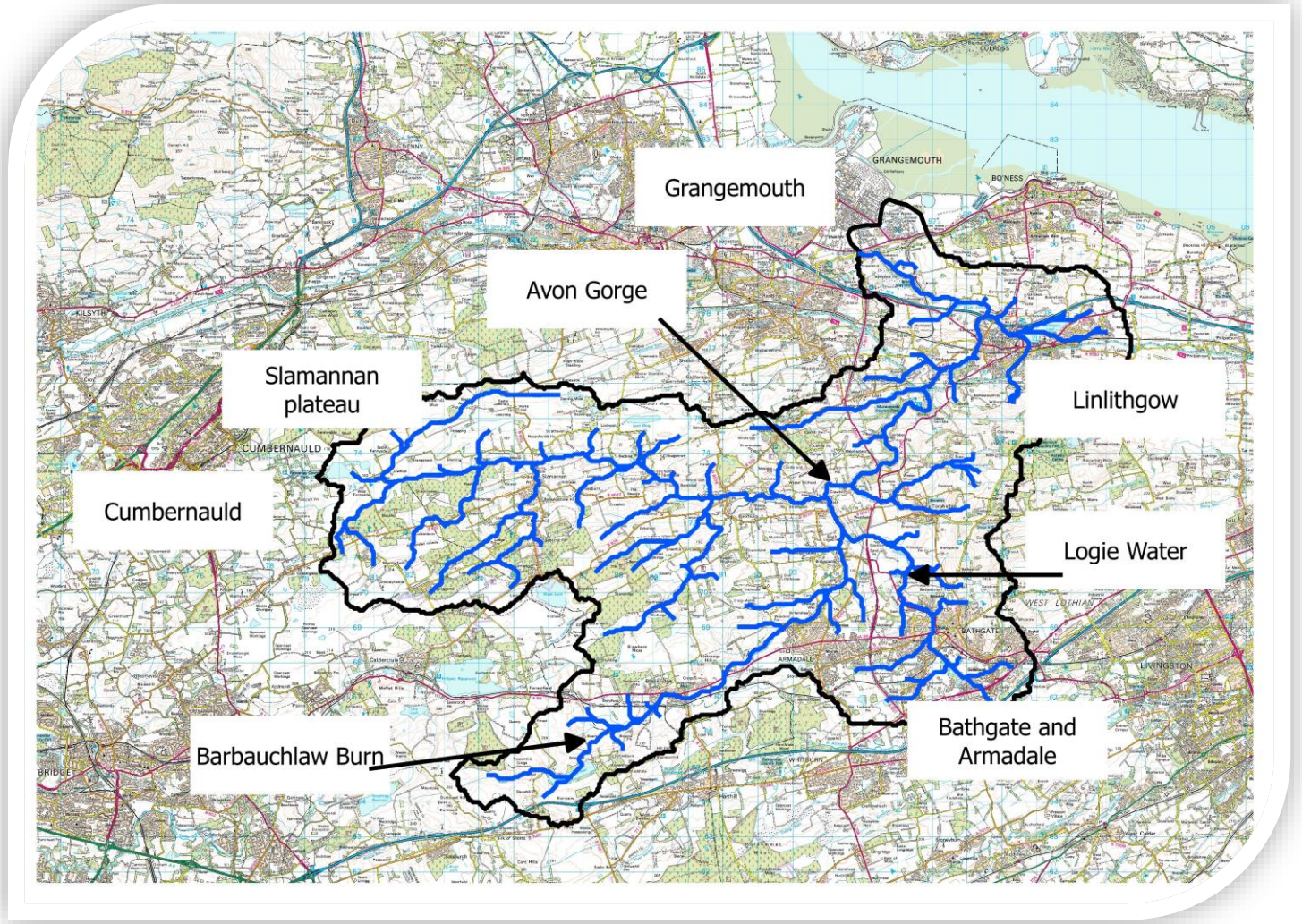
Physical evaluation – carried out by existing Trust staff - built on our core fisheries management activities

- Electrofishing
- Fish counters
- Invertebrate assessment
- Rapid assessment walkover
- Vegetation surveys
- Fixed point photography

River Almond catchment

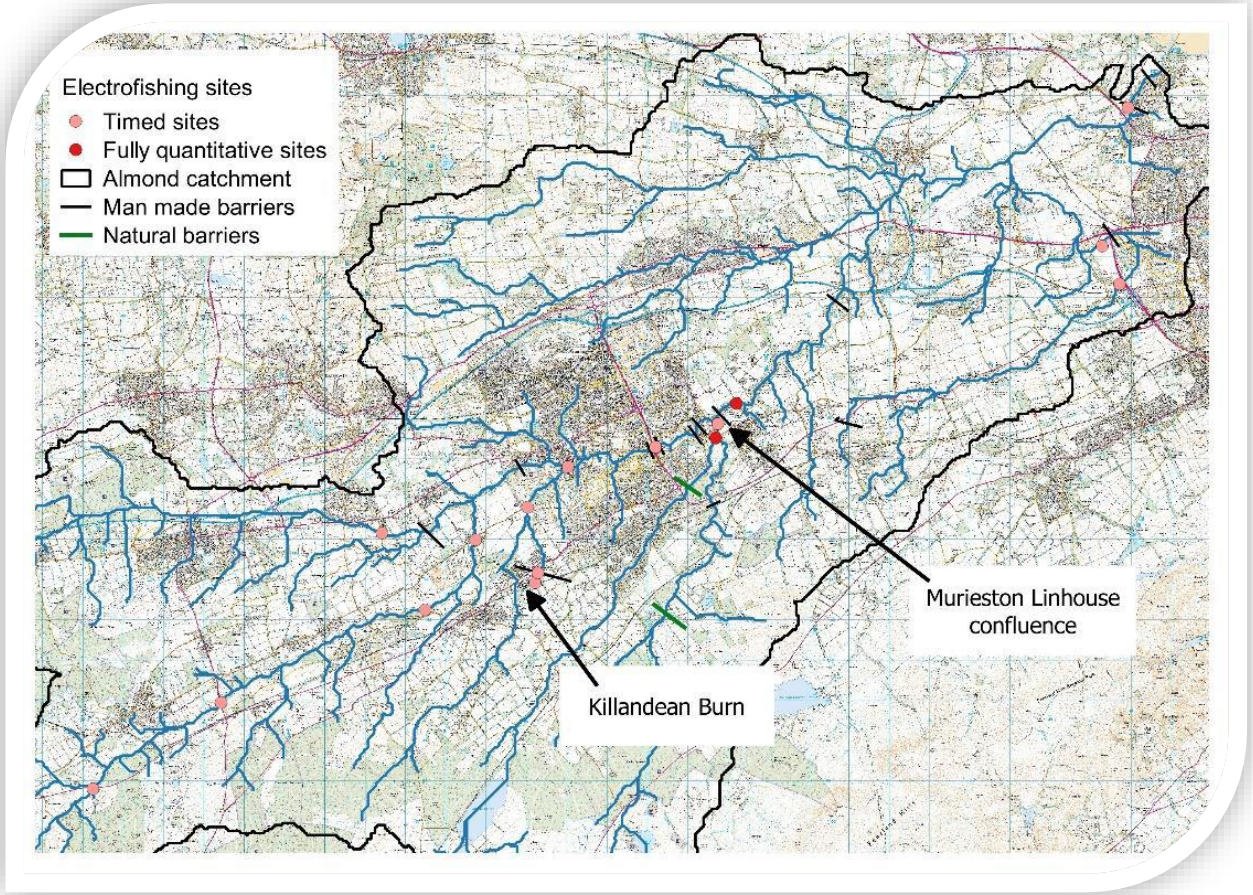


River Avon catchment



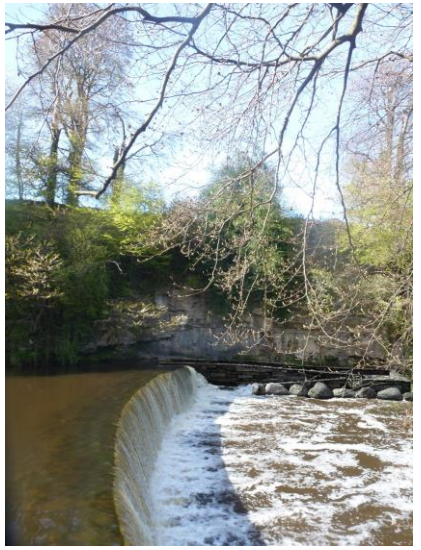
Electrofishing

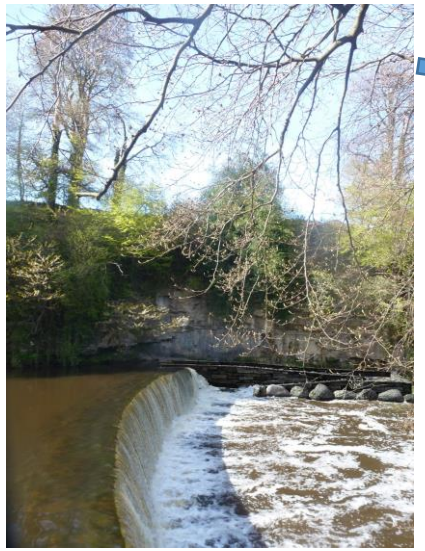
- Who can take part
- Who runs it
- What does it involve?
- Training events
- Site selection
- Resources needed

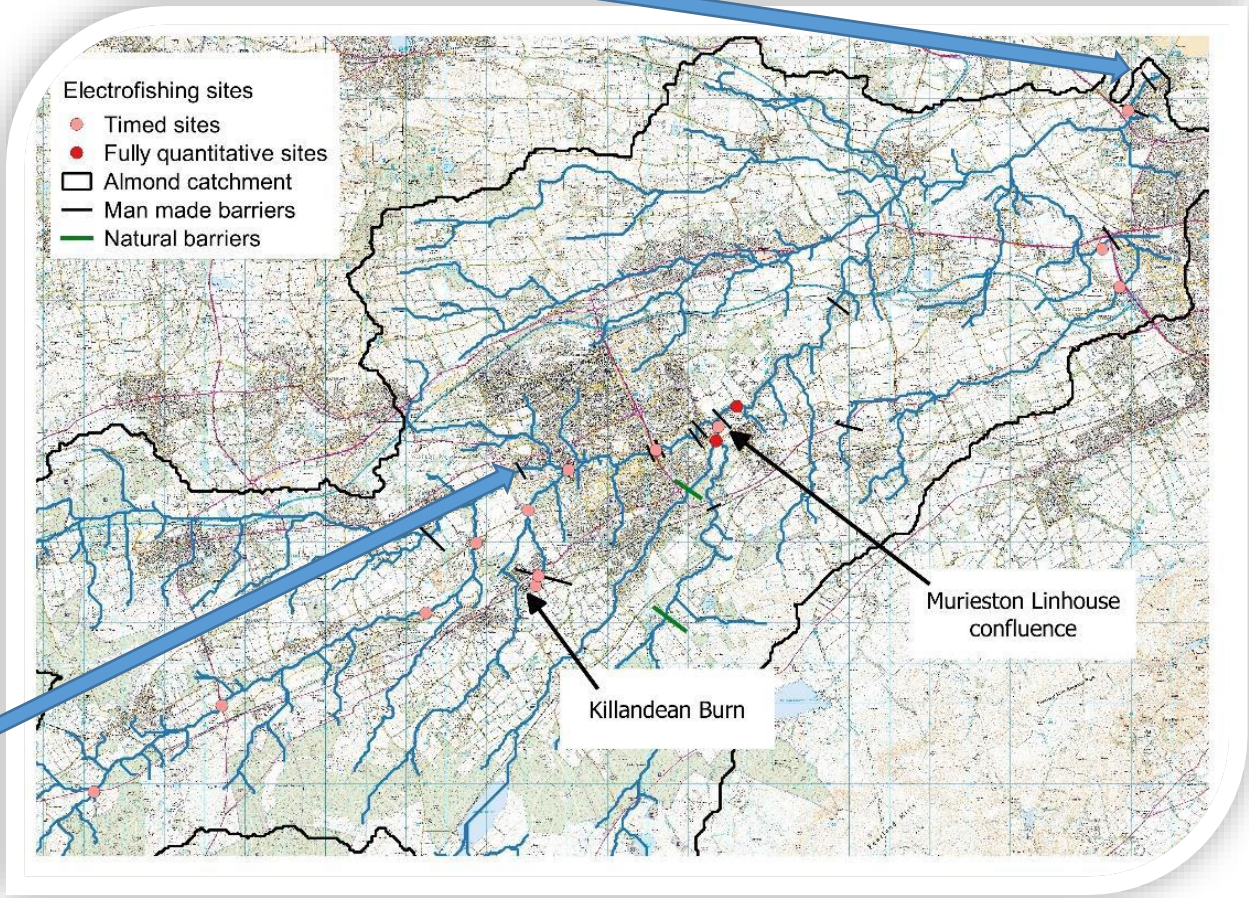


Fish Counters

- Who runs it
- What does it involve?
- Who can take part? (Video feeds and website QR codes)
- Resources needed
- Site selection

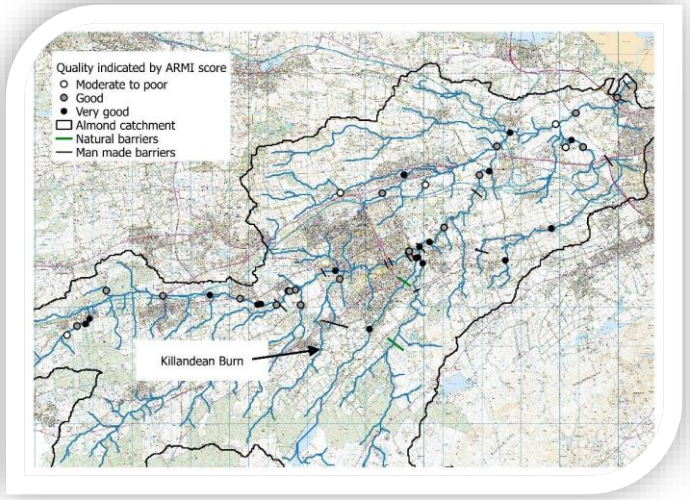


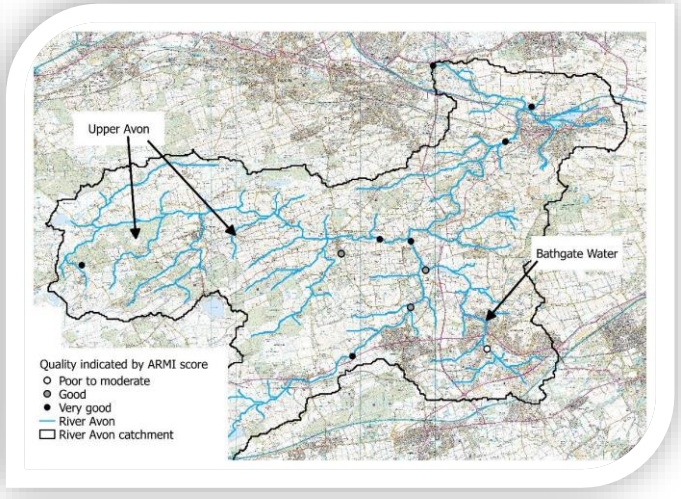



Electrofishing sites
Timed sites
Fully quantitative sites
Almond catchment
Man made barriers
Natural barriers
Murieston Linhouse confluence
Killandean Burn

Anglers Riverfly Monitoring Initiative

- Who can take part?
- Who runs it?
- What does it involve?
- Easy for the layperson
- Ties in with SEPA regulatory remit
- Training events
- Site selection
- Resources needed





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Anglers Monitoring Initiative – boxes ticked

- Engaged anglers and other stakeholders
- CPD for volunteers
- Biological data generated
- Project monitored
- Can offer clear demonstration of project success where habitat has been improved

Habitat / morphology rapid walkover assessment

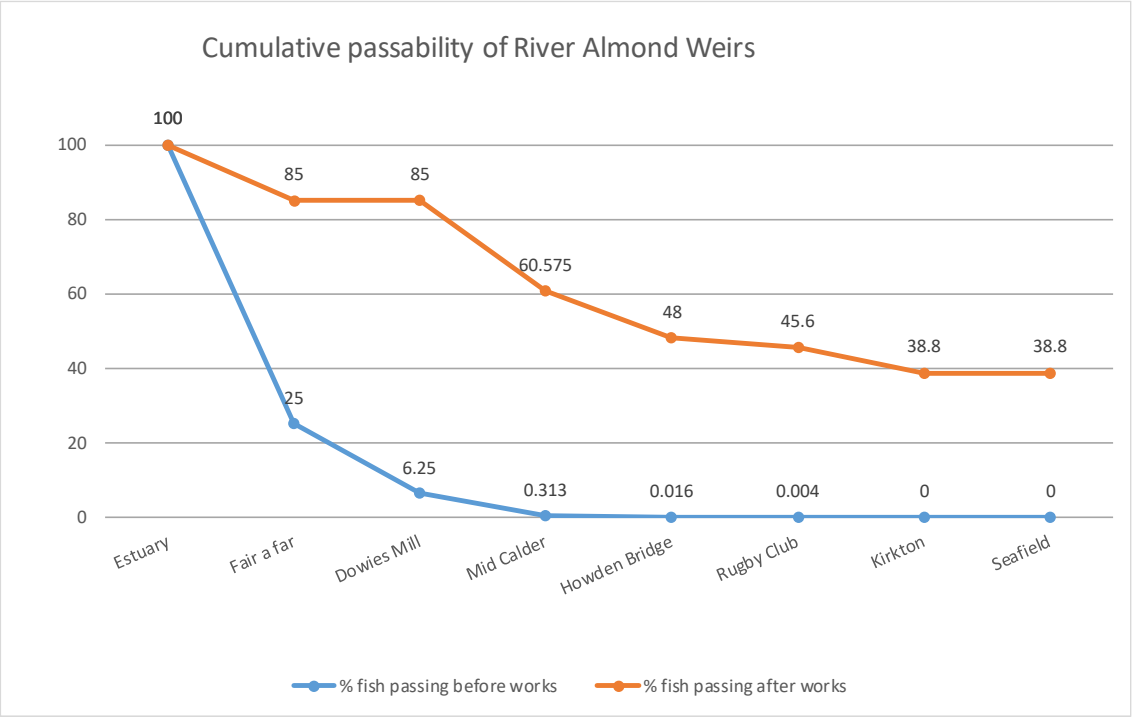
- Uses method adapted from of Environment Agency walkover outlined in Hendry and Cragg-Hine with elements of River Habitat Survey
- Trained staff members rather than volunteers
- Data informative at a simple level, therefore can be directly disseminated to the lay person

Fixed point photography

- Focus on capital project progress (e.g. barrier easement)
- Carried out by site contractors
- Lends itself to engagement as it's a visual record, easily presented on social media and websites
- Trail cameras included for shorter interval recording
- Images recorded before, during, immediately after works and the following season
- Frequency depends on rate of works/change

Development of research projects and partnerships

- Invertebrate / barrier interactions (Napier University)
- Cumulative impacts model



Non physical evaluation – requires input from external audience development consultant

- Training
- Learning
- Engagement / activities
- Volunteer opportunities

Community engagement – who?

- More ready to engage – anglers, schools, local environment groups, other environmental organisations (e.g. rangers), scouts, brownies, students, work experience placements, visitors (to events/ exhibitions), older (retired) people, corporate (environment sector)

- More difficult to engage – mental health groups, youth groups, young offenders, minorities, corporate (non-environment sector)

Why aim to increase volunteer diversity?

- Diversify skills, abilities and knowledge brought to the project (two-way flow of information)
- Reduce risk of volunteer fatigue by having a cross cutting section of the population
- Increase volunteer retention
- Maintain project momentum
- Bring benefit to communities where it is most needed
- Increase range of contacts/potential partner organisations

Training engagement – evaluated by number of volunteers attending courses

- Outdoor first aid
- Electrofishing
- Spraying PA1/PA6AW
- Anglers Riverfly Monitoring Initiative
- Citizen science – pollution monitoring
- Project and volunteer management
- Work experience students

Engagement targets

- Successful and recognisable project branding (external designer contracted for this)
- Pop up (touring) exhibition produced
- Leaflets/fliers
- Trail routes available on online interactive map
- Number of Primary (10) and Secondary schools (2) engaged with each year
- RiverLife scout badge (10 troops to be engaged)
- Small grants scheme
- 4 talks given per year reaching 160 attendees, 5% of who go on to volunteer
- Volunteer recruitment 200 over 4 years, 50 from non-traditional groups

Engagement targets continued…

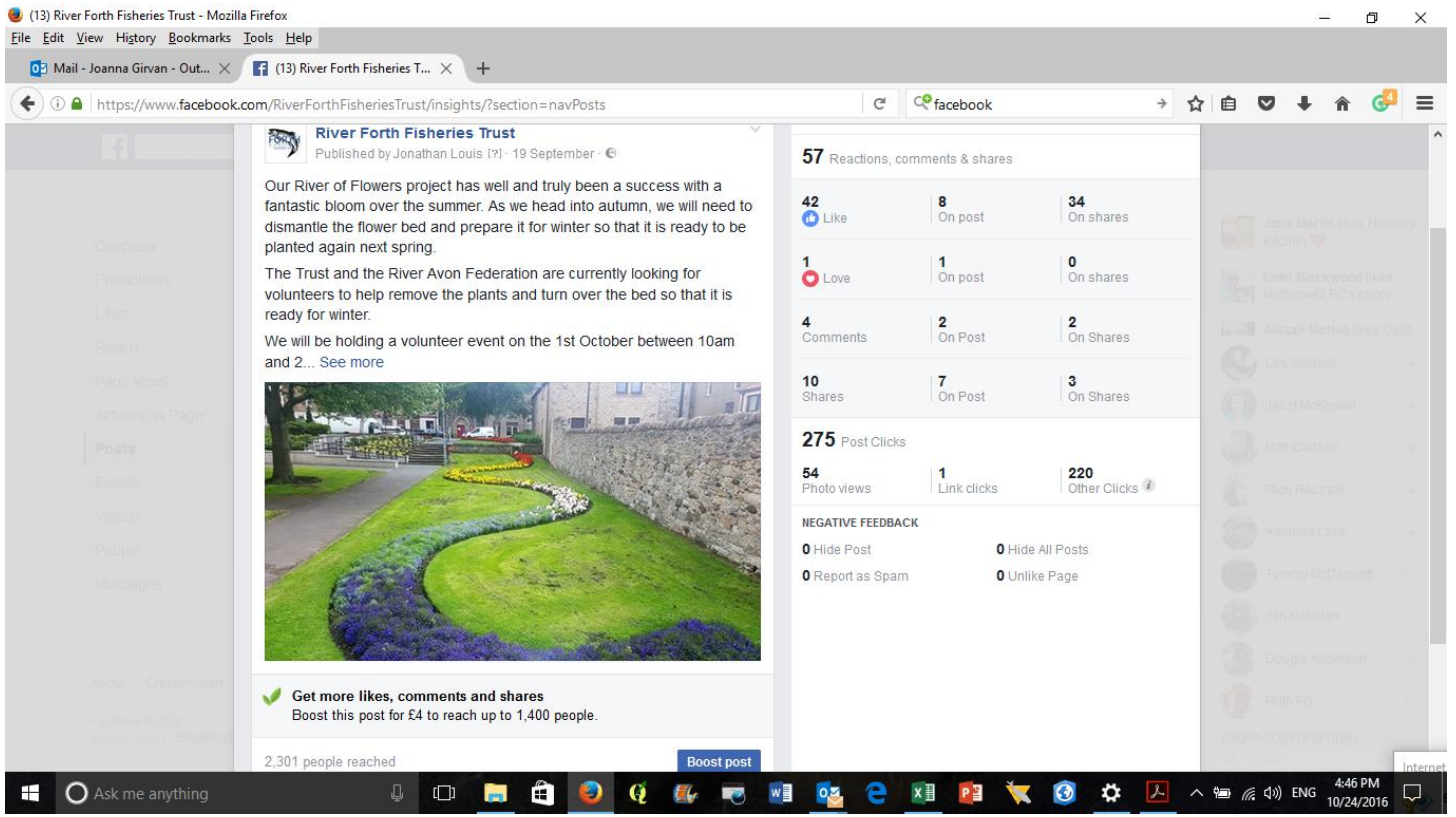
- 1,200 volunteer days delivered
- 50 volunteers funded to attend conferences and events
- Volunteer communications programme developed
- 36 guided walks completed with 360 participants
- 60 people attending introduction to angling events aimed at young people
- Interpretation installations at Almond Valley Heritage Centre (including fish counter video feeds) in place by year 3
- Themed street art in place by year 4
- Barriers bursary fund to promote accessibility to heritage
- Budget spent and outcomes consistent with aims of the programme

Other evaluation targets

- Raising water body classifications (SEPA RBMP)
- Open up 10km of habitat for migratory fish
- Reduce area of Japanese knotweed
- Website and online forum in place by end of year 1
- Digital outputs…

Digital outputs

- Social media presence
- 1,000 Tweets
- Project mentioned in 6 partner organisation publications
- 30 publications annually of press releases in print and other media
- QR code on interpretation installations linked to dedicated websites
- 3- 4 Facebook posts each week



Improvements to whole organisation

- Wider skill set, increased resilience
- Development of shared experience and working with a wide range of people
- Review of policy and procedure in line with HLF expectations
- Develop new and innovative techniques for future community engagement
- Better resourced organisation
- Enhanced influence
- Centre of excellence, improved presence and public awareness
- Healthier funding future