

In channel weed cutting

What you might see

You may see our Environment Agency teams, or contractors on our behalf, out and about cutting aquatic weed on some of the Main River that we maintain. This can help reduce the risk of flooding to people and property in specific areas by allowing water to flow more easily.

Main Rivers need regular maintenance. The Environment Agency bids for public funding every year to carry out this maintenance and we use our permissive powers to deliver the works. Other ordinary watercourses are still important to local flood risk, but are likely owned by the landowner who will be responsible for maintenance and conveyance.



An example of the boats we use to cut aquatic weed

What we are doing and why

Aquatic weed control is important for maintaining watercourses. If weed is left to grow unchecked, it can restrict the river channel. Detached weed can also collect around bridge structures and flood defence assets, potentially causing blockages and a flood risk.

We use a combination of weed cutting boats and excavators to cut and remove weed, and we carry out monitoring of the watercourse before, during and after weed cutting. Upon removal, the cut weed is left to dewater, or to flow down to a weed screen for removal. This allows for any aquatic insects, invertebrates and eels to safely return back to the river.



Weed is removed from the river using an excavator



Creating a better place for people and wildlife

How we are supporting wildlife and the environment

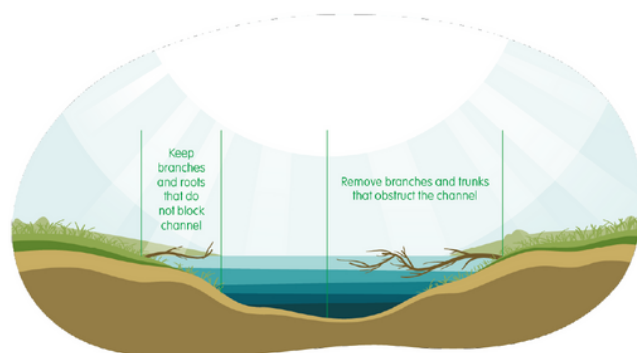
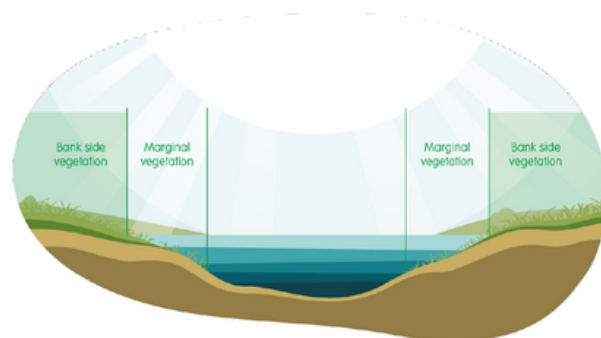


Our fisheries and biodiversity teams support us to ensure that we assess and control any risks.

We aim to leave a cover margin of vegetation on the river banks for wildlife, as well as smaller in-river branches and roots that will not cause a flood risk but can provide good habitat, as shown in the diagrams opposite.

We start weed cutting in June so that we do not impact spawning fish earlier in the season, and the exact timing of the weed cutting on particular stretches of the river depends on weather and flow conditions, to avoid having an impact on water quality for wildlife.

We measure water temperature and dissolved oxygen levels before, during and after we cut weed, to ensure that we do not put wildlife at risk. If conditions deteriorate, we will stop work until it is safe to continue.



For more information or to contact us

Call: 03708 506 506

Email: EMDenquiries@environment-agency.gov.uk

Incident hotline: 0800 80 70 60

Please use this number, which is open 24 hours a day, to report incidents such as flooding, blockages, unusual flow of water, damaged flood defences or pollution.

To find out more about our maintenance activities, please visit consult.environment-agency.gov.uk/east-midlands/flood-risk-management or scan the QR code.



Creating a better place for people and wildlife