

River Idle Q3/4 Maintenance Update

Routine Maintenance

Tree Works

Tree Works are currently being planned along the River Idle. Trees which have the potential to reduce conveyance (rate at which the river flows) are assessed to see if removal is required. The focus stretches where the Idle begins at Conjures Alders and continues downstream to West Stockwith Pump Station.

Grass Cutting

All grass cuts by machinery and by hand along the River Idle embankments have been completed. Regular grass cuts improve the strength of the root network and erosion resistance of the embankment.



Figure above: Grass cutting via Robot Mower

Weed Cutting

Between June and December, we undertake weed cutting by weed cutting boats on the Idle or by hand through Retford centre. The weeds are either removed once they've been cut or they float downstream and are removed out of the debris screen at West Stockwith Pump Station.

Future Maintenance and Works

We commenced de-silting works at Stone Hill Farm, Everton from October. We will work through the Autumn to deliver de-silts of stretches shown in blue below. De-silting can improve conveyance and increase channel compacity. It is carried out in locations where it will make a difference.

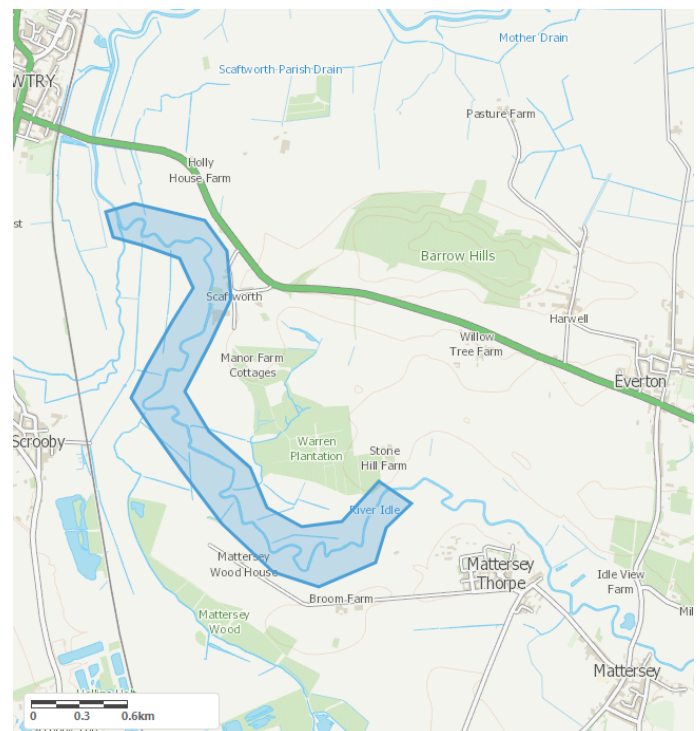


Figure above: Stretch of the River Idle where de-silts are taking place

Before we undertake de-silting activities, we work closely with our Fisheries & Biodiversity teams to mitigate the impact of any site construction works on the surrounding environment.

Further de-silting works have begun at the end of October, downstream of Bawtry Bridge. Sections which are being de-silted have been identified by sediment analysis (bathymetric surveying). From this, we can selectively remove large areas of silt which could contribute to conveyance issues.

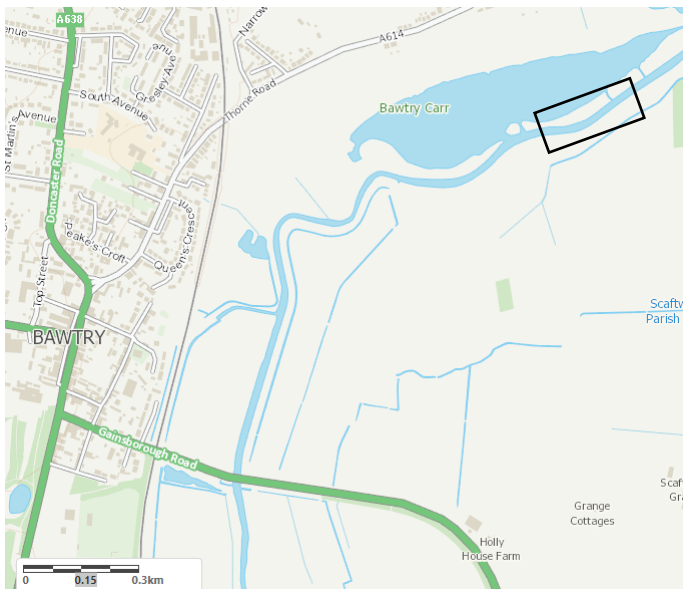


Figure above: The black box shows the stretch of the River Idle where de-silts are currently taking place in Bawtry

The works are carried out by an operative in an excavator which has a de-silt bucket attached. The silt is removed down to riverbed level and is spread next to the machine. Special considerations are taken when removing the silt to ensure that environmental risks are mitigated.



Figure above: Excavator de-silting the River Idle at Stone Hill Farm

Completed Works

De-silting of the culverts along Grove Lane and Blackstope Lane in Retford have been completed in October. AMCO Giffen (an Environment Agency contractor) have completed the works and have removed 93 tonnes of silt from the culverts. The culverts have been re-surveyed to understand the true condition and to prepare for any future improvement works.

Works have started on the culvert along Arlington Way, Retford. Works are due to finish in early November. De-silting of these culverts will increase the conveyance along the Beck, flowing into the River Idle.



Figure above: EA staff speaking to AMCO Giffen about the culvert de-silts

A 'low' spot along a high ground section of the Idle along Darrel Road, Retford, has been topped up. The work completed has raised the level of the 'low' spot, topping up the high ground with soil and spreading grass seed to promote growth. Although the high ground is not a flood defence, the aim of the work is to encourage water to stay in the river channel.



Figure above: High ground top up along the River Idle