

PROGRESS REPORT 2020

Projects | Governance | Finances

Governance

The board has approved our Charitable Incorporated Organisation application.

We now have a full board, and you can see who they are on [our website](#).

Sadly both original trustees, Kim Ferran-Holt and Mel Parr have stepped down, we are very grateful for their support and hope they can still join us at events and surveys.

Media

This year media has been focused on other issues, and we have not had many stories released. Our island clean up was featured by local press and newspapers in September.

How did we do?

We;

- Collected over 2000 items
- 3 island litter picks
- 1 micro plastic survey
- 2 fountains installed

We achieved this with;

- 36 volunteer hours

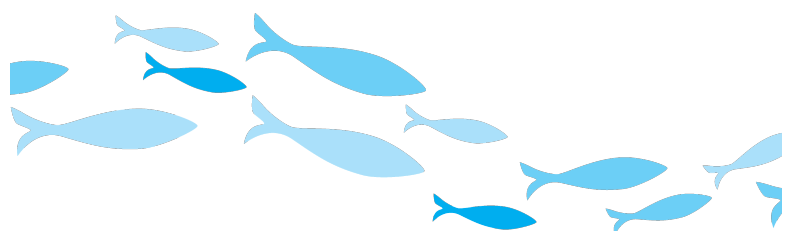


This year's progress

Who would have thought, when we released our previous progress report, that in two months we would be locked down facing a pandemic. Despite this the Foundation has made progress in the existing projects, one annual event returned and has developed a new project in partnership with local environmental organisations.

Thames Manta

The results have been analysed by Brunel University, but were delayed by Covid19 and in the end some samples have been left. Despite this 915 micro-plastics and 580 microfibres in only five sites in the Thames. That's 4 items



New Projects

We have established two projects, but we are hoping to add a few more this year. We continue to hope to be able to start this in 2021 or 2022.

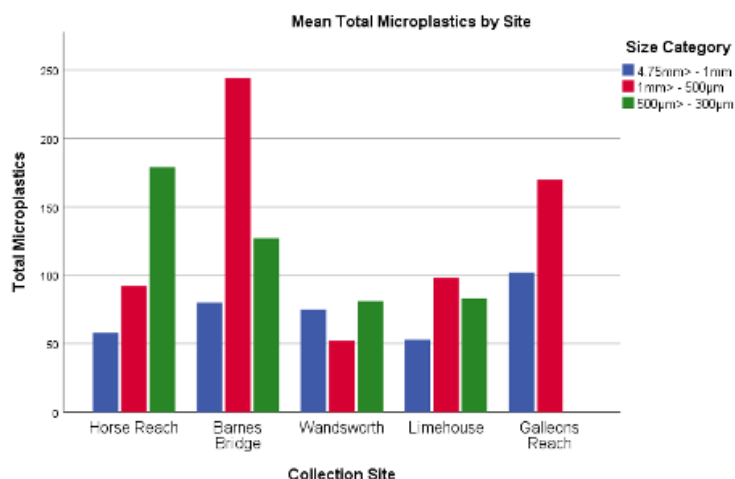
We are partnering with the Environment Agency, Rochester Oyster & Floating Fishery, Kent & Essex Inshore Fisheries and Hadlow College to monitor the benefit of fisheries management action in the Medway. Habitat and protection is really important for juvenile fish particularly Sea Bass, which are in turn, really important for local fishermen. Look out for news about Fish of the Medway Project on our website

Surprise visitors

Despite the restrictions we did manage to partner with Jetstream Tours, to run our Fish and Chip cruises with the expert speakers. The first we were able to run once lockdown was released. The speaker, Steve Colclough had just started his talk, when the skipper called down; he had seen dolphins! It was in fact a whole troop of around 30 Common Dolphins. These don't normally come into the estuary but they are around the coast.

These animals were following fish up the estuary and gave us a fantastic spectacle both on their way in or out of the estuary.

We couldn't beat that again all year!



However Brunel and the Foundation have continued the partnership and following Tanya visiting this years student cohort, we have another MSc Student interested in continuing Victors work.

Sampling this year had to stop in the spring, after the first lock down was released we managed to sample the Medway, and despite being from one household the volunteers tested the method was still safe with face coverings. It is, but we recognise that long periods will not be comfortable, so we are running shorter sampling days in 2021 which means there will be more chances to get out and join us. Training will begin in March.

Litter Free Maritime

This partnership & community project has not managed any group clean ups this year, but we have had a strong monitoring effort by one volunteer on her daily exercise for the Litter Boom in the Marina. You can see a full year time-lapse on our [You-Tube channel](#). Thanks to Evie we know when it works, what it is collecting and if it needs to be repaired.

The MDL marina team have partnered with Foundation volunteers and are supporting the clearance of the boom when volunteers can't. LRF also continued work with Chatham Maritime Trust, with funding from the Postcode lottery, to install two water fountains across the area, more instalments are planned to come in 2022.

Plan for 2020-1

We were planning a lot of exciting new activities in 2020, that we can still deliver in 2021. We hope that the Fish of Medway will become an LRF projects for 2021.

We will also be continuing to work on the Thames Manta, all the sampling periods are on line already. The Litter Free Maritime will re-enter Phase 2 expanding the interventions and data.

Get involved

We are finding ways to make action to improve the environment possible even under the restrictions and protections. Also we recognise that actually getting a large group together will not be possible for the time being, so we are looking forward with more remote events and engagement. If you have any ideas what you would like to hear from the Foundation or a workshop you would like to take part in, that we can do please get in touch info@living-river.org

If you want to get involved or know someone who might, please contact us: info@living-river.org

All events are listed on our calendar on our website. Click [here](#).

Litter Critter Island Clean Ups

One thing we have managed to keep up was our special September trips to the Island Clean ups under our Litter Critter programme. We always limit numbers to reduce our impact even though September is the best time for the birds in the Medway.

This year we filled an even bigger boat with just as many volunteer hours, mostly because it was bottles, so volume but not weighted. We filled our bags and boat up very quickly as a result.

Over the few visits we managed in between the strong winds there was easily over 1000 bottles alone collected, and a skip was completely full with all the other items. We hope to return every September and do more to the islands.

Wildlife Guide

We also published a small guide to the wildlife on the estuaries, locally - Thames & Medway. It is available from local businesses, such as on Vessels of Jetstream Tours, Pirates Cave, Chatham Marina, Queenborough

Harbour and Snaffles in Upchurch. Or you can get the book directly from us on line. The funding from all the sales will be used by LRF, this has already raised over £400.

