

Wildlife to thrive as major Tees restoration project begins

Press release

The scheme at Ormesby Beck will improve the area's resilience to the changing climate and provide a richer environment for residents and nature.



Works taking place at Ormesby Beck Tidal Barrage

A £750,000 project designed to restore parts of the natural Tees Estuary and make way for new wildlife habitats is now underway.

The Ormesby Beck Intertidal Restoration Scheme aims to open the Ormesby Beck and Marton West Beck catchments of the River Tees to allow fish to pass while also restoring its natural tidal cycle and vital wildlife habitats.

The Tees Estuary is one of the most heavily modified and developed estuaries in the UK with less than 10% of the original habitats for wildlife such as wading birds remaining. Ormesby Beck is an urban river that flows through Middlesbrough to the River Tees.

As part of the first phase of the Ormesby Beck Intertidal Restoration Scheme, which will complete in December, the Environment Agency will remove the North Ormesby Tidal Barrage and Navigation Screen, constructed in 1995, to allow the channel to flow as it naturally should, creating a better environment for wildlife to thrive along the river again.

Work is underway on site with Environment Agency contractors, BAM Nuttall, aiming to fully remove the tidal barrage and screen by the end of December 2022.

Joe Reed, Project Manager for the Environment Agency said:

“In many of our estuaries, rising sea levels caused by climate change are threatening tidal habitats. Removing barriers, like here at Ormesby Beck, mitigates some of this loss by allowing the estuary to expand and preserve

its natural environment. This will create the correct conditions for wildlife to thrive, without increasing risk to life or property from flooding."

Published 16 November 2022