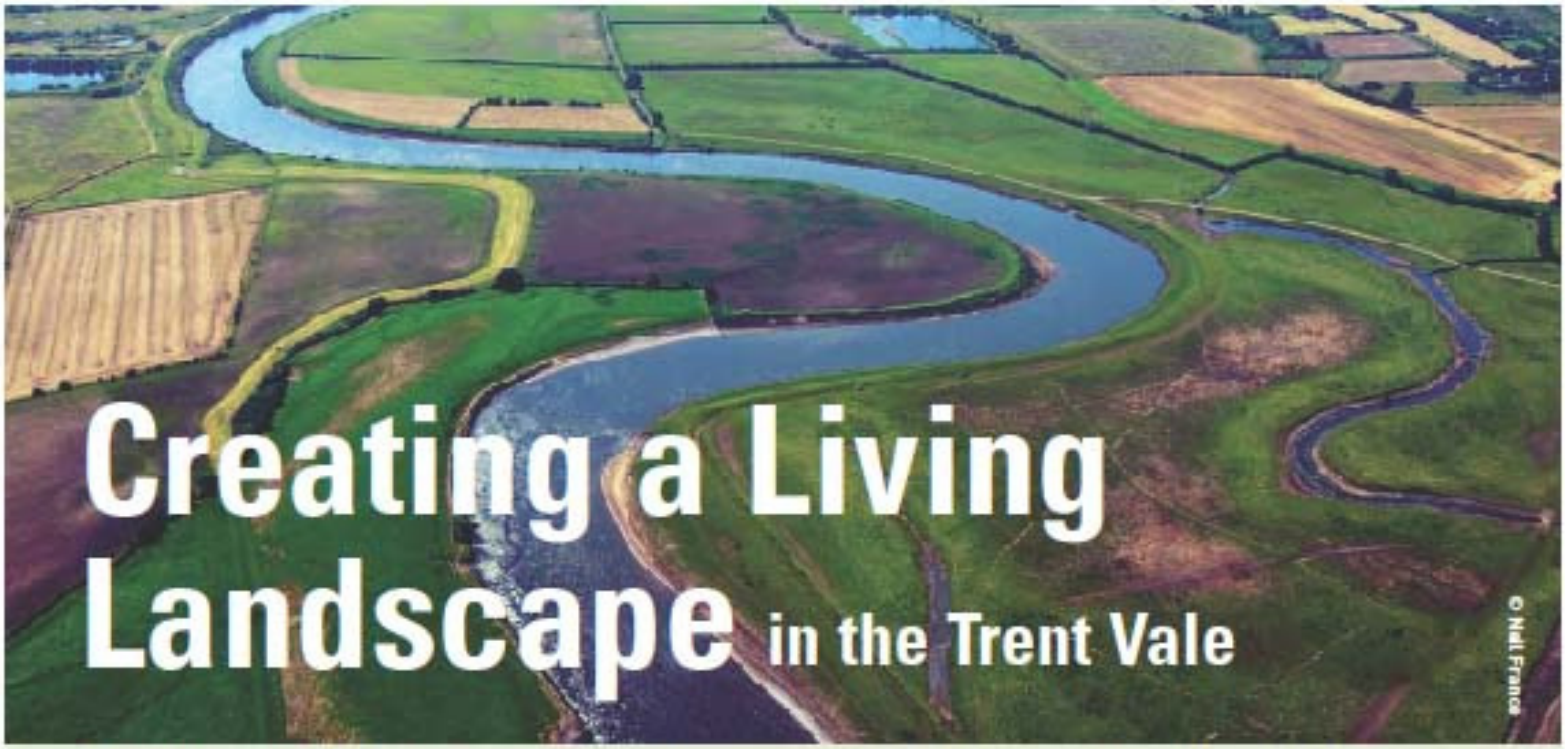
© Neil France

Creating a Living Landscape in the Trent Vale

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust has long championed the need to restore the Trent and its valley habitats. Indeed, the charity was formed as a result of a campaign to safeguard riverside habitats at Attenborough.

Back in 2003, as part of our 40th Anniversary celebrations, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust set out a vision of how we hoped the county's landscape and wildlife habitats would look in 40 years time. Seven years on, we are delighted to say that real progress is being made.

One of the key elements of our vision was a desire to see the county's rivers and streams restored to their former glory and it is now clear that the foundations have been laid for a dramatic transformation of our most important river and valley habitats over the next decade. Our work in the Idle Valley is moving forward apace, progress is also being made with efforts to improve habitats along the river Erewash, and we remain committed to securing a better future for other rivers such as the Meden and the Maun.

On the Trent, our county's major river, we continue to improve riverside habitats at reserves including Attenborough and Farndon Willow Holt and we are active in two major partnerships. On Trent, established to co-ordinate efforts to transform the Trent along its entire length, and The Trent Vale Landscape Partnership (TVLP) which is dedicated to conserving and enhancing the landscape as well as providing opportunities for people to enjoy and re-connect with this great river in the Trent Vale between Newark and West Stockwith, north of Gainsborough.

Having highlighted the progress being made with the TVLP in recent issues of Nottinghamshire Wildlife we are delighted that the project is now fully underway. A new project team has been appointed including Jenni Hignett, our new Habitats and Heritage Officer, who will work closely with farmers, other landowners and community groups on a range of projects.

Transforming the Trent – Our Vision for the Trent Holmes area

Working alongside other partners, including our sister Wildlife Trust in Lincolnshire, Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust's focus is to create a vibrant landscape where farming benefits both people and wildlife. Here, local communities and visitors can experience creatures such as bitterns and water voles and enjoy displays of colourful waterside wild flowers.

Our efforts are focused on both banks of the Trent between North Muskham and Dunham Bridge; an area we believe has the potential to be of national significance for wildlife.

Working with landowners and partners to identify suitable land we aim to recreate and restore substantial areas of floodplain habitats across an area of 4,500 hectares over the next 20 years.

The stretch of the Trent which forms the backbone of the landscape in this area still retains valuable features. This includes extensive areas of permanent grazing pasture which are home to small numbers of scarce breeding birds such as redshank and curlew, as well as areas of marshland and reedbed.

© John Smith

▲ Redshank

Nottinghamshire Wildlife Trust nature reserves in the area such as Besthorpe, with its valuable remnants of species-rich seasonally wet grassland, and Spalford Warren, home to rare heathland habitat, will form a key element of our work and showcase positive habitat management.