

Chesham Moor FAQs

Thank you for all the interest in the current works taking place Chesham Moor. Rather than responding to individual questions, we thought an FAQ style document would be more useful – please continue to ask and we'll do our best to provide clear and useful answers.

Question 1:

Who is paying for all this work?

Answer:

This project was originally set-up in 2020 as a collaboration between the Chilterns Chalk Streams Project (CCSP) and the Chiltern Society, with funding from the Government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund, and we were able to extend scope of works to include the bridge through a successful application to the Defra Access Grant. More recently the CCSP has developed a partnership with Affinity Water to identify and deliver habitat improvement schemes on chalk streams and they have provided approximately half the total funding which enables this project to be delivered this autumn.

We are also working closely with Chesham Town Council, but have not taken any public money contribution from them.

Question 2:

Are we cutting down trees in the project site?

Answer:

We are aware of the importance of the existing mature trees and have actively designed the project to ensure we can retain as many as possible. We will however, need to remove one tree which is pushing hard against the concrete and is leaning at an acute angle, but we will replace it with a native sapling that will have more space to grow.

Some of the other trees will have a few branches trimmed to provide a better balance of light and shade over the channel, but will otherwise be left as they are.

Question 3:

Do we know about the water voles who live in the river?

Answer:

Yes. Since 2004 the CCSP has been working with the River Chess Association and BBOWT on a water vole recovery programme and it is partly through the success of this that water voles have been sighted near Chesham. The programme has three main components: Mink control, Habitat restoration and Regular surveying; for more details please visit <https://www.chilternstreams.org/our-work/projects/river-chess-water-vole-recovery-scheme/>.

We surveyed the project site prior to works commencing and noted that there were feeding signs near the confluence but no burrows – the concrete banks currently prevent water voles from colonising this reach. For the duration of the project, we will be removing one part of the area where voles can feed, but given the good habitat on the rest of the Chess, are comfortable there are enough alternatives available. And through



the project will be creating a much-improved habitat for water voles to feed, restoring natural soft banks into which water voles will be able to burrow, and hopefully breed.

Question 4:**Why is the bridge being replaced?****Answer:**

The current bridge has reached the end of its useful life and no longer conforms to UK legislation. To make it safe for everyone who uses it, the new bridge will be wide enough for a parent and child to cross together and, with step-free entry and exit, will enable people with mobility issues to be able to access the Moor.

We believe that it is also sensible to replace the bridge now, when we are onsite and already working to improve the channel. Any future attempt would be more expensive and result in a second period of disruption both to users of the Moor and the river channel.

Question 5:**Why are we not solving the problem of flooding on Moor Rd?****Answer:**

The work at Chesham Moor is a habitat improvement project where Chesham Town Council is the largest landowner. It has been in discussion for at least five years and for which we have worked hard to secure the necessary agreements, funding and consents from the Environment Agency & Buckinghamshire Council. It solves the problem of how to manage the end-of-life concrete banks in a way that helps the natural environment and will provide a much-improved asset to the community of Chesham.

The flooding on Moor Road is occurring because there is an excessive build-up of sediment and vegetation in Lord's Mill pool. Lords Mill pool requires a flood management project to address this issue and that is the responsibility of the landowner, Buckinghamshire Council. They have begun the process of developing short and long-term solutions for the site and it is hoped that something will be announced soon. The Chilterns Chalk Streams Project is providing support to assist the Council in this.

If you have any further questions or for more information, please contact the Chilterns Chalk Streams Project on office@chilterns.org.uk

