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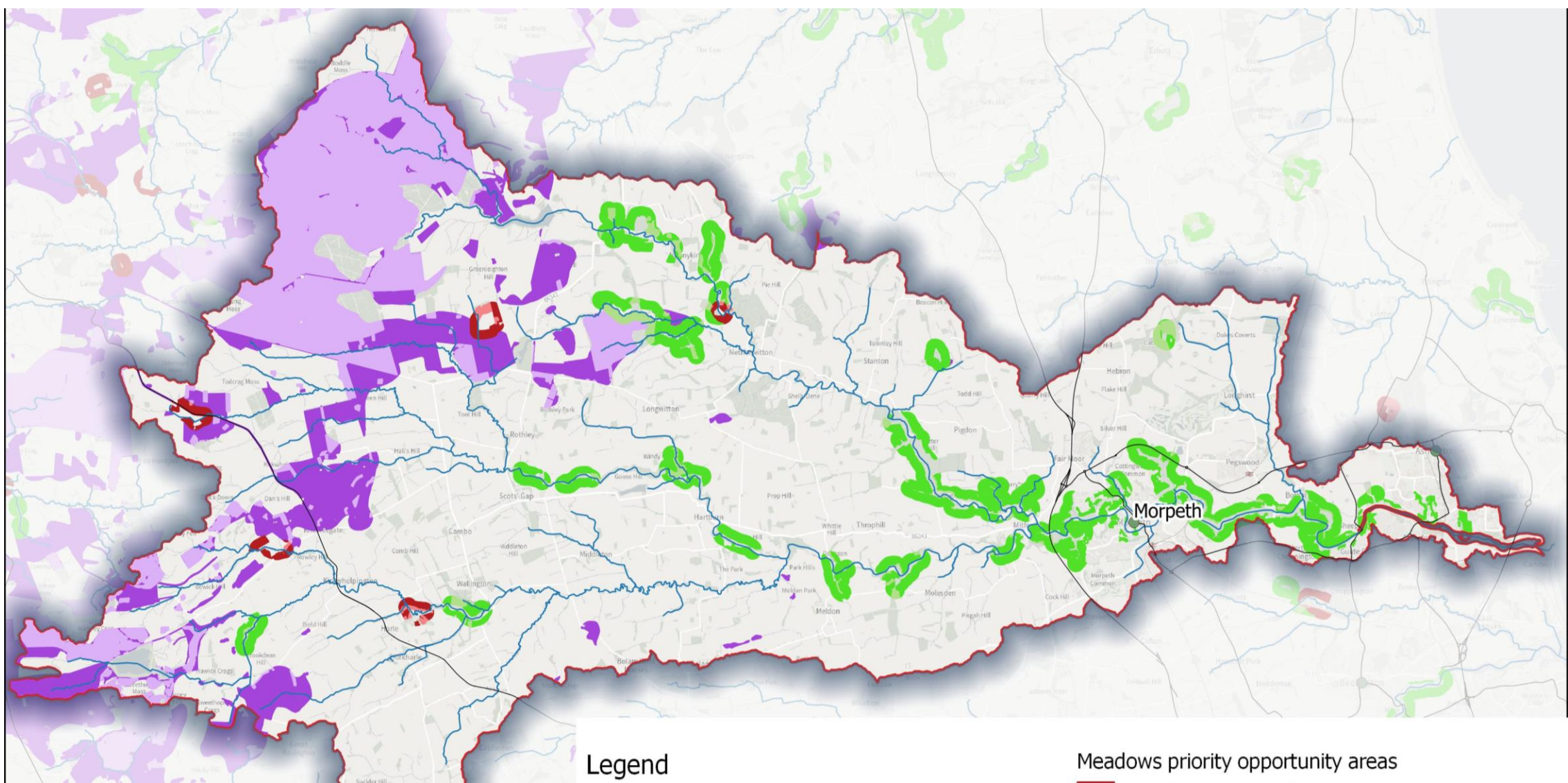
Wansbeck Restoration for Climate
Change 2023-25



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**Wansbeck Restoration for Climate
Change 2023-25**

**Partnership
working: Wallington
Hall Estate (National
Trust) Little Harle Estate
and Middleton North
Farm
Natural England
Environment Agency
Great Northumberland
Forest
Woodland Trust
Forestry Commission**

**National Trust
5431 ha**

**Middleton North
178 ha**

**Little Harle
695 ha**



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What can we do? Every habitat within the project has been depleted but has the potential to sequester carbon and be improved for nature...

- Where sediment load is high in a water course, we can intercept sediment by slowing the flow through increasing floodplain connectivity and riparian habitat
- Where peat quality is threatened by drainage, we can block the drains (also called 'grips')
- Grassland can be managed to increase wildflower meadows and pollinators will follow
- Trees need successional planting and fencing where young trees are grazed off

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Impacts – wide hedgerows provide important bio-security protection for stock; [wood-wise-hedgerows-and-hedgerow-trees.pdf](https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk/wood-wise-hedgerows-and-hedgerow-trees.pdf) ([woodlandtrust.org.uk](https://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk))



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Impacts – new hedgerows provide farm animals with protection from extreme weather events.



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Impacts – grassland diversity increases mineral take-up by plants through the soil and can improve a hay/ silage crop to benefit livestock; reference [Enhancing improved grassland advice for livestock farming - Farm Wildlife](#)



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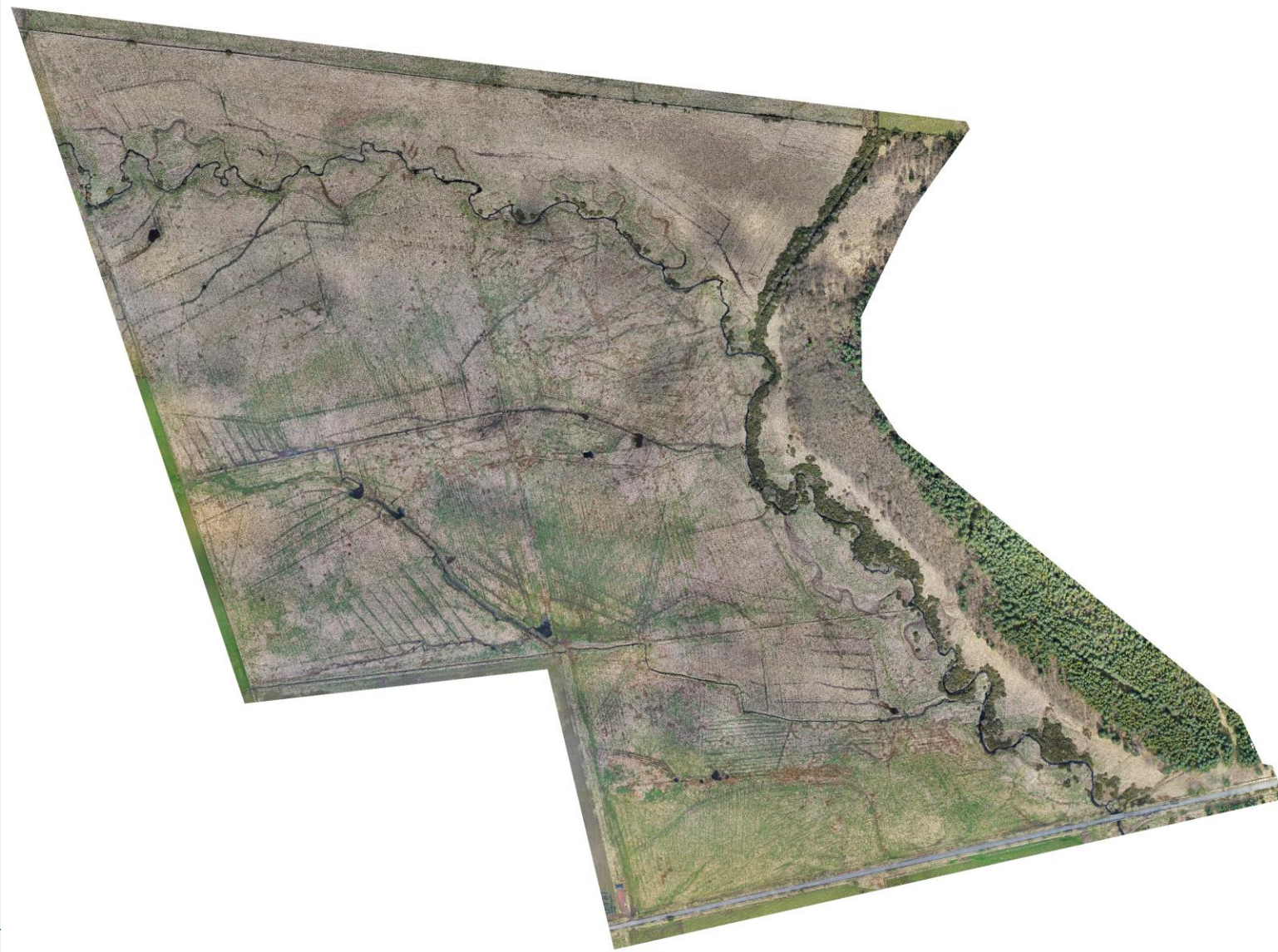
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Impacts – monitoring soil builds a data set that can be used by farmers to improve their primary asset

Drone shot showing drains on Gallows Hill





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Impacts – diverting the Harwood Burn into old channels and re-wetting the floodplain to help address the natural hydrology after grip blocking has deepened the main channel.



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Impacts – the water held back by hundreds of these small leaky dams will help take the peak flow rates off high water events in the Wansbeck channel downstream



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Impacts – creating a series of shallow pools helps to store water at high rainfall and creates outstanding new habitat for wading birds



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Impacts – deep peat measurements in Harwood Forest presented a new site for peatland restoration



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Impacts – landowner engagement has been vital to the programme of changes on farms



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Impacts – the National Trust, a key partner, consider that the Wansbeck Restoration project has bolstered their Wilder Wallington work



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Hands on education opportunities have been created at degree level



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Impact - Education delivered at the primary level; the teachers said that the learning supported the children's understanding of the countryside



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WANSBECK RESTORATION FOR CLIMATE CHANGE THE WILDS OF WANNEY PROJECT

INTRODUCTION The Wansbeck Restoration for Climate Change project began in 2023 on land that forms the upper catchment of the River Wansbeck. The project is intended to explore and measure scientifically a variety of interventions to help store carbon and increase biodiversity while being fully compatible with real farming. This is one of only a few such experiments, the results of this ten year study will be used to form national government policy and advice on combating manmade climate change and species extinction.



L-R: The Upper Wansbeck catchment includes large parts of the old Wanney Railway Line; welcome return of meadow flowers, buttercups and clover; flood plain and footbridge at Little Harle; Middleton North's ethos includes making space for nature with the planting of new trees, work able to continue under this project.



Left: this project aims to ensure farm animals and wildlife thrive side by side.

Right: A dam made by Beavers released as part of the ambitious Wilder Wallington National Trust project. Read more about it or get involved via their webpage:



"I was delighted to be invited to take photographs of this project happening on my doorstep. I grew up in the suburbs and, despite now living in a rural village, I have seen very little of what happens on farms or how the behind the scenes decisions get made. It occurred to us that many other people may be in the same boat and my role in the project began to grow. As I took photos of stakeholder meetings, and documented the activity of Groundwork and their partners, we talked about ways to make this process more publicly accessible.



We began to offer guided walks through the Upper Wansbeck catchment and encouraged guests to take photos of what they saw. Many did so and this exhibition, both the information boards in this meadow and the mounted photographs in the visitor centre, contains much of their work as well as some of my own. We hope that the gallery helps give an insight into the beauty and diversity of this area, and sheds light on the work of the rangers, scientists and farmers who are striving to make informed and responsible choices about landscape management for the future.

Chris

Christine Woodcock, photographer trading as WhiteOakStudios

Background: a map showing some of the active areas within this project



© Unless otherwise stated photographs are by Christine Woodcock - learn photography with Chris at www.WhiteOakStudios.org

Wansbeck Restoration for Climate Change 2023-25

Impact – the walks and photographic exhibition brought the project to a wide audience, increasing awareness

Thank you for listening

For more information please contact:

Lesley.Silvera@groundwork.org.uk



Working together to build the evidence for nature-based solutions to climate change and biodiversity loss