



Mend the Gap Annual Report 2024/5

Mend the Gap is enhancing areas of the Goring Gap in the Thames Valley that have been impacted by the electrification of the Great Western Railway.



Welcome

"I am proud to see Mend the Gap go from strength to strength. We have now planted over 4km of hedge and 600 trees to help reduce the impact of the railway gantries. Over £400,000 is committed to school landscapes and parish councils and over 200 hectares of land on its way to being enhanced for nature. This is only possible with collaboration across this fantastic community."

Ruth Staples-Rolfe, Programme Manager

Highlights

Mend the Gap by 2025

LANDSCAPE
ENHANCED

283
hectares



LANDOWNERS
ENGAGED

103



SCHOOL
CHILDREN
ENGAGED
over 6000



PEOPLE
ATTENDING
EVENTS
over 800



PARTNERSHIPS
THROUGH
PROJECTS
over 170



Staff

Programme Manager: Ruth Staples-Rolfe

Project Support Officer: Janet Tuppen

Contact us at:

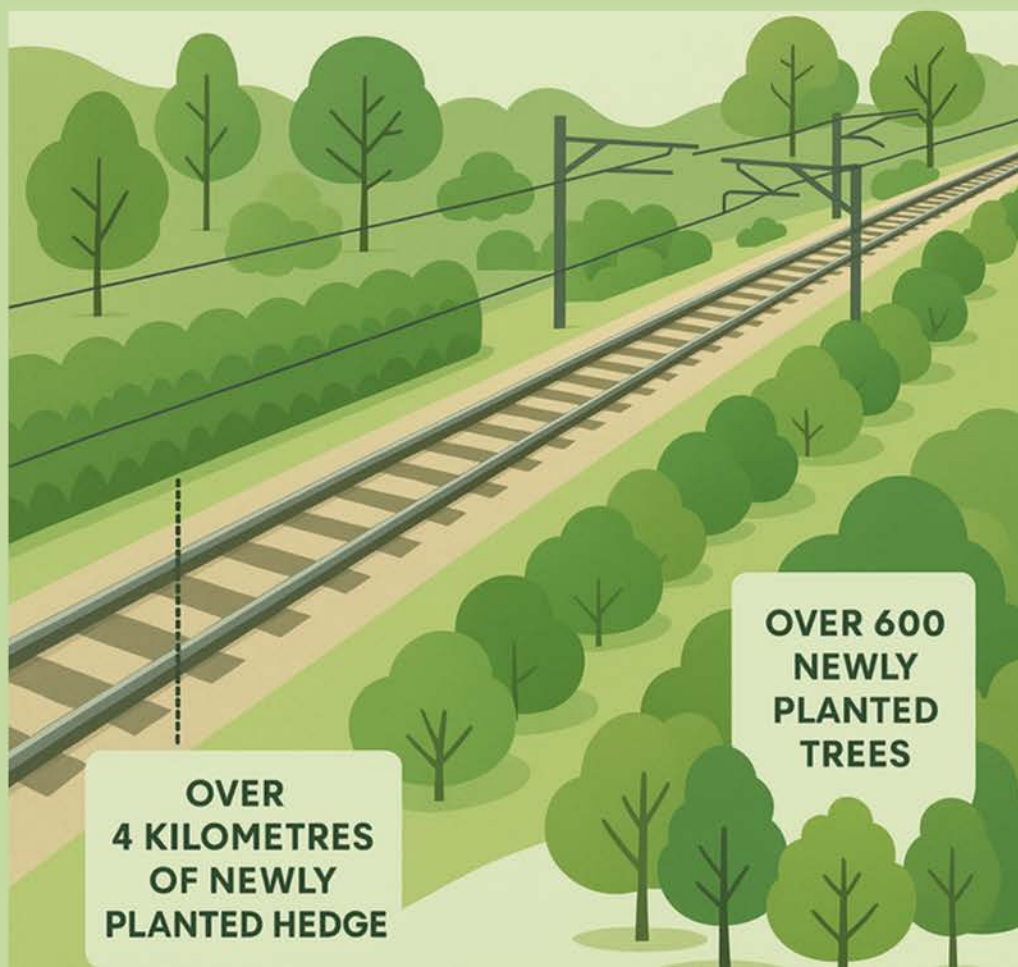
mendthegap@chilterns.org.uk.

Mitigation planting

Mend the Gap is working with Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group to identify the views that are most impacted by the new gantries over the railway. This includes views from Hartslock Nature Reserve, the Holies and many more.

Working with local landowners we design planting schemes that take into consideration the current use of the land and the longer term maintenance. We hope that by the end of March 2026 we will have approximately 70% of this planting completed. There are many elements to balance and a long term vision is required to consider how the trees will grow and change the views.

You can see more information on the work we have done so far at <https://mendthegap.uk>.



Chalk

We aim to enhance Chalk landscapes that are within 3 kilometres either side of the railway.

Insight

Botanist Andy Byfield is working with landowners on both sides of the Goring Gap to expand our understanding of plant populations which love these precious chalk escarpments.

Restore

Rectory Farm in Streatley is restoring their 84 hectares of chalk grassland

We have supported the National Trust to restore their chalk grassland at Lough Down in Streatley

Monitoring and Legacy

We have helped establish a legacy of landowners working together as a farmer cluster to monitor and enhance the chalk habitats



Wetland

We aim to enhance Wetland habitats that are 3 kilometres either side of the railway.

Insight

We have worked with the local records, centre, Wildlife Trusts and access specialists to better understand the landscape we want to enhance.

Restore

We are working the local Wildlife Trusts and catchment leads to focus on conservation target areas in each sub-catchment, this is to make sure that money is focused where it can have most impact on wildlife. We have created ponds in Goring Heath and South Stoke, and Wetlands in Sulham and Cholsey. We have more planned in Goring, Streatley and Basildon.

Monitoring and Legacy

We are supporting the Environment Agency and catchment leads to strengthen a catchment based approach which engages with local communities and establishes investment ready projects that can respond to the needs of the five water sub-catchments in the Mend the Gap area.



Public Engagement

Access

Mend the Gap has funded access specialist Kieran Foster to audit the accessibility of the area. We are now looking at how best to act on these recommendations and link to the Chalk and Wetland habitats.



Schools

Mend the Gap is funding four secondary schools and seven primary schools to support students to understand where they live in relation to the National Landscapes and develop their school landscape to better reflect the special qualities of National Landscapes.

Parishes

Mend the Gap is funding parish councils to address projects important to their communities like the South Stoke Community Garden, hedging at Sheepcot in Goring and The Springline citizen science and art project in Cholsey.



Investment in the Landscape



MTG Annual Report		
Programme Financials to 31 March 2025		
	Income (£)	Expenditure (£)
Enhancement & Mitigation initial budget	3,750,000	
Interest earned to date	163,914	
Total Available Income as at 31 March 2025	3,913,914	
Core costs		392,958
Enhancement Expenditure		521,160
Mitigation Expenditure		328,894
Total Project Spend to 31 March 2025		1,243,012
Remaining budget		2,670,902
Core costs committed to end of the project		485,327
Remaining funds available for Enhancement & Mitigation projects		2,185,575



**North Wessex
Downs**
National
Landscape



Chilterns
National
Landscape



Future

Mend the Gap is due to continue to deliver in this landscape until at least 2028 but the North Wessex Downs and Chilterns National Landscapes will continue to build on the Mend the Gap legacy and have embedded this landscape in their new nature recovery plans and management planning.



**Thank you for
working with us**

Additional information

www.mendthegap.uk

Follow us on:



MendtheGap2024



Mend the Gap

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