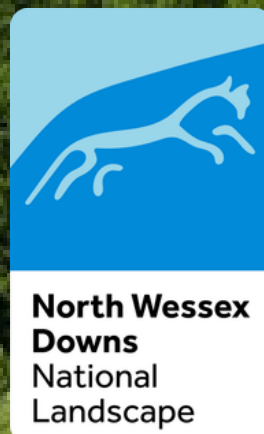


Mend the Gap Annual Report 2025/6

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

"This was the busiest year for Mend the Gap so far: we have now planted over 5km of hedge and 720 trees to help reduce the impact of the railway gantries. All our schools have completed or are in the final stages of their projects and many of our Parish Council projects were concluded in this year. To date, Mend the Gap has funded the enhancement of over 300 hectares of land for nature. This is only possible with collaboration across this fantastic community."

Ruth Staples-Rolfe, Programme Manager

Mend The Gap Overview

Nature Recovery

65% of the funding given so far is for Nature recovery



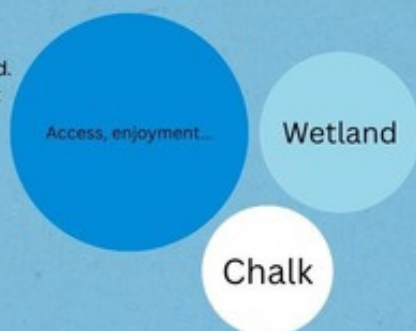
10,510 People involved



Over 10,510 people have been involved
Over 6,000 students have benefited

Projects completed

45 projects completed
37 being delivered.
63 more leads not yet developed



Mitigation planting continues



5 km of hedge



Over 720 trees



Staff

Programme Manager: Ruth Staples-Rolfe

Project Support Officer: Janet Tuppen

Contact us at:

mendthegap@chilterns.org.uk

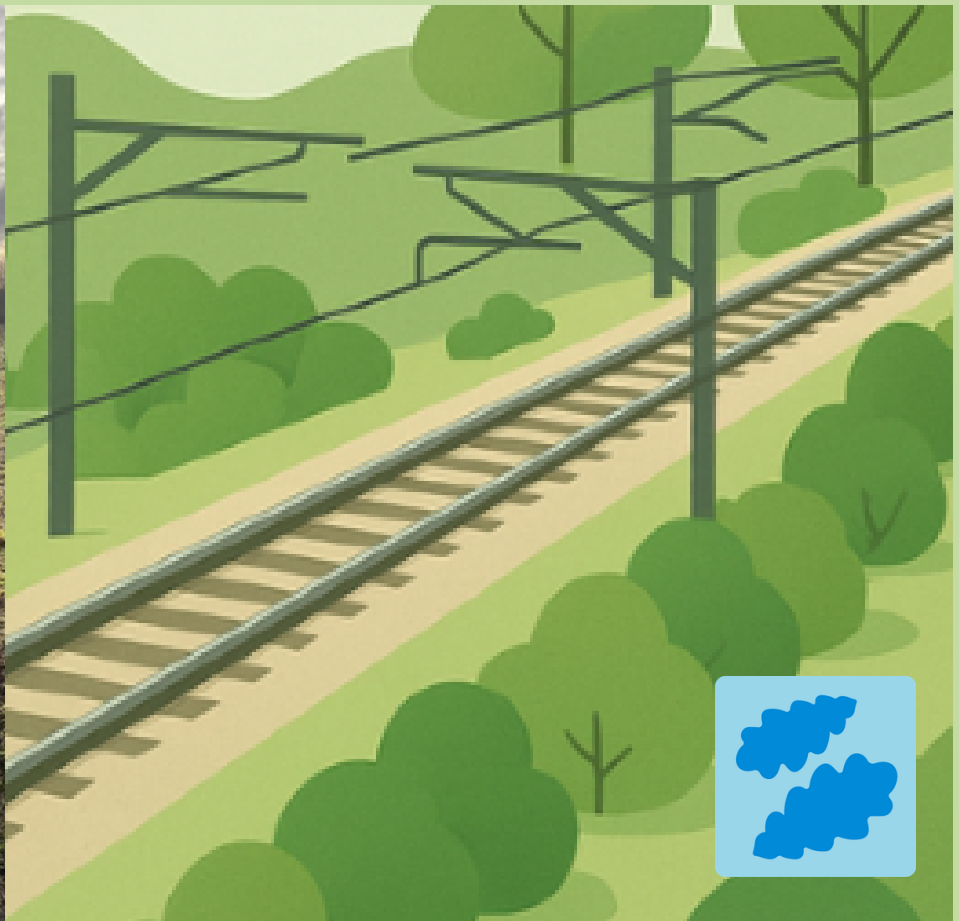
Mitigation planting

We have now planted a total of over 5 kilometres of hedgerows and over 720 hedge and standard trees for the whole project, with 52 trees and nearly 1 kilometre of hedging planted in 2025/26.

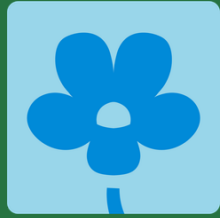
Mend the Gap continues to work with Farming and Wildlife Advisory Group to identify the views that are most impacted by the new gantries over the Great Western Railway. This includes views from Hartslock Nature Reserve, the Holies and many more.

Working with local landowners we continue to design planting schemes that take into consideration the current use of the land and the longer term maintenance.

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 continues to survey sites in the Goring Gap and this has resulted in two new projects which will see a example of equicentric grazing established and scrapes and wood meadow habitats created.

Restore

We are working with chalk sites which buffer Rectory Farm to build on our work along Rectory Road, Streatley.

Monitoring and Legacy

We established the farm cluster in the South Chilterns to work collaboratively to understand soil testing, owl species needs, and much more - facilitated by Future Nature facilitator Karen Davies.



Wetland



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

Insight

We have built on the survey work to establish records of the second largest population of Desmoulin Whorl Snail in Oxfordshire working with BBOWT to coordinate survey work along the conservation target area.

Restore

We have enhanced wetland habitats in Cholsey, Goring, Whitchurch and Pangbourne. We have further projects planned for Cholsey and Tidmarsh.

Monitoring and Legacy

We continue to work with partners across the Mend the Gap area to improve the health of all five rivers and their catchments through a joined-up approach to land and water management. This approach engages with local communities, and we are establishing connections to bring forward suitable projects for future investment in the area. Highlights this year have been the initial meetings for the Wallingford Brooks with the community, Thames21 and Action for the River Kennet.



Public Engagement



Access

In response to the access audit last year we have worked with rights of way officers to finalise Path 21 at Streatley and put together further funding proposals that will be delivered over the next two years, equating to over £85,000 investment.



Schools

Mend the Gap's four secondary schools and seven primary schools have been delivering their projects to better understand National Landscapes and enhance their school landscape. At Langtree they explored rain gardens and natural flood management. The whole project equates to over £400,000.



Parishes

Mend the Gap continues to work with Parish Councils to address projects important to their communities, like nature recovery at Pangbourne Meadows and access improvements in Goring. A highlight this year was the Springline citizen science and art project in Cholsey.



Collaboration

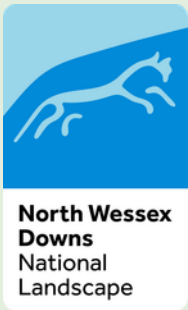
Mend the Gap values the partnerships and delivery parties we work with in the area. By collaborating with organisations at a local community and strategic level we can draw on existing knowledge and expertise, and achieve more together. We have supported 89 delivery parties to date and enabled a further 237 organisations to be involved.



Investment in the Landscape



MTG Annual Report		
Programme Financials to 31 March 2026		
	Income (£)	Expenditure (£)
Enhancement & Mitigation initial budget	3,750,000	
Interest earned to date	235,794	
Total Available Income as at 31 March 2026	3,985,794	
Core costs		529,052
Enhancement Expenditure		988,576
Mitigation Expenditure		447,671
Total Project Spend to 31 March 2026		1,965,299
Remaining budget (including interest) covers core, staffing, committed and identified projects and a contingency		2,020,495
Total committed to core, enhancement, mitigation including contingency		1,575,765
Projected remaining identified (but not committed) funds available for Enhancement and Mitigation		444,730



Future

Mend the Gap programme will continue to deliver in this landscape until June 2028 but the North Wessex Downs and Chilterns National Landscapes will 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

email:

mendthegap@chilterns.org.uk